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SCANDINAVIA

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SCANDINAVIA

A POLITICAL HISTORY OF DENMARK,
NORWAY AND SWEDEN

FROM 1513 TO 1900

BY

R. NISBET BAIN

Author of "The Daughter of Peter the Great," "Charles XII and
the collapse of the Swedish Empire," etc., etc.

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TO
MY FATHER

GENERAL PREFACE.

The aim of this series is to sketch the history of Modern Europe, with that of its chief colonies and conquests, from about the end of the fifteenth century down to the present time. In one or two cases the story commences at an earlier date: in the case of the colonies it generally begins later. The histories of the different countries are described, as a rule, separately; for it is believed that, except in epochs like that of the French Revolution and Napoleon I, the connection of events will thus be better understood and the continuity of historical development more clearly displayed.

The series is intended for the use of all persons anxious to understand the nature of existing political conditions. "The roots of the present lie deep in the past"; and the real significance of contemporary events cannot be grasped unless the historical causes which have led to them are known. The plan adopted makes it possible to treat the history of the last four centuries in considerable detail, and to embody the most important results of modern research. It is hoped therefore that the series will be useful not only to beginners but to students who have already acquired some general knowledge of European History. For those who wish to carry their studies further, the bibliography appended to each volume will act as a guide to original sources of information and works more detailed and authoritative.

Considerable attention is paid to political geography; and each volume is furnished with such maps and plans as may be requisite for the illustration of the text.

G. W. PROTHERO.

PREFACE.

THE political history of Scandinavia is the history of the frustration of a great Baltic Empire. That process of concentration and amalgamation which, in the course of the fifteenth century, resulted in the formation of national monarchies throughout Europe, was anticipated, nearly a hundred years earlier, in the North, by the union of the three northern kingdoms beneath the sceptre of Margaret of Denmark. The Union of Kalmar, imperfect and unstable enough while it lasted, had its best chance of permanency at the very moment when it was about to break up for ever. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Denmark and Norway were, practically, one state; and the differences between Denmark and Sweden seemed in a fair way of being amicably adjusted, when a great crime, "The Stockholm Massacre," converted what had hitherto only been political divergence into national hatred. Henceforward Denmark and Sweden drifted hopelessly apart. From the beginning of the sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth century this hatred manifested itself in no fewer than eleven fierce wars, which diverted the best energies of both nations from their natural channels with enormous resultant waste; and this, too, at the very time when

the hegemony of a united Scandinavia might, with comparative ease, have been extended over all the Baltic lands from the Weser to the Vistula. No insuperable obstacle stood in the way of such a hegemony. The collapse of two great mediæval organisations, the Hansa and the Teutonic Order, opened to any compact, homogeneous, modern state with a predominant sea-power more than one door of entrance into headless Germany, anarchic Poland, and barbarous Moscovy. Sweden was such a state. What might not have been effected by Sweden and Denmark together, two sister kingdoms with the same religion, similar institutions, and practically the same language, when, notwithstanding their mutually obstructive and destructive rivalry, one of them, Sweden, actually succeeded in establishing, for a time, an Empire of the first rank, an Empire only destroyed by the banded might of Eastern and Central Europe after a twenty years' struggle?

The present volume is, mainly, an attempt to describe the rise of the Scandinavian Kingdoms to political eminence, and their corresponding influence on European politics generally. But the whole story has also its own peculiar dramatic interest, for it is the chronicle of the ambitions and the achievements of a long series of exceptionally great men, master-magicians of statecraft, who wrought marvels with the feeblest material resources. The history of Sweden in particular, from the middle of the sixteenth to the beginning of the eighteenth century, is a record of surpassing individual genius which seems almost to turn aside, or, at least, suspend for a time, the operation of natural laws. Unfortunately, this heroic process of empire-building on flimsy foundations, if it elicited, most certainly

also exhausted the vital forces of Scandinavia. This fact, I think, explains the tardy development of the unusually manifold and brilliant Scandinavian literature. The national energy and intellect were wholly absorbed by urgent material necessities; there was no leisure in that period of storm and stress for "the amusement of letters."

Naturally, in writing a history of Scandinavia, I have drawn, for the most part, from native sources. But, occasionally, I have found it necessary to resort to Slavonic authorities to bridge over gaps or to reconcile contradictions. Thus the Polish Wars of Gustavus II and Charles X have been studied from the Polish as well as from the Swedish point of view; and for the proper understanding of the Great Northern War I am not a little indebted to the later volumes of Solovev's great "*Istoriya Rossii*." Swedish and Danish documents are, of course, mutually supplementary and corrective.

R. NISBET BAIN.

September, 1904.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

THE salient features of early northern history first emerge dimly from the mists of antiquity about the middle of the eighth century. The southernmost branch of the Scandinavian family, the Danes, referred to by Alfred a century later (circa 890), as occupying Jutland, the islands and Scania, was, in 777, strong enough to defy the Frankish empire by harbouring its fugitives. North of Scania we find, about the same time, the two closely connected nations of the Swedes and Goths, the former inhabiting the region round Lake Mälare, and the latter extending south of Lakes Wener and Wetter to Scania and the sea; while, westward of the Goths, the numerous "Fylker," or clans of the Norröner or Nordmænd, had long since expelled the aboriginal Finns from the fjords and valleys of southern Norway. Favourable circumstances gave the Danes the lead in Scandinavia. They held the richest and therefore the most populous lands, and geographically they were nearer than their neighbours to western civilisation. Christianity was first preached in Denmark by Ebo of Rheims (822) and by Ansgar (826–865); but it was not till after the subsidence of the Viking raids (which, beginning with the ravaging of Lindisfarne in 793, virtually terminated with the establishment of Rollo in Normandy, 911, using up the best energies of Scandinavia for 120 years), that Adaldag, archbishop of Hamburg, could open a new and successful mission.

This resulted in the erection of the bishoprics of Sleswick, Ribe, and Aarhus (circa 948), though the real conversion of the country must be dated from the baptism of King Harold Bluetooth (960). Forty years later King Olaf I Trygvessön established Christianity in Norway by force of arms (circa 1000), though it was not till half-a-century after that date that King Sverker I (1134-1155) gave militant paganism its death-blow in Sweden.

Meanwhile, the Danish monarchy was attempting to aggrandise itself at the expense of the Germans, the Wends, who then occupied the Baltic littoral as far as the Vistula, and the other Scandinavian kingdoms. Harold Bluetooth (940-986) subdued German territory south of the Eider, extended the *Danevirke*, Denmark's great line of defensive fortifications, first erected by his father Gorm, to the south of Sleswick, and planted the military colony of Jomsborg at the mouth of the Oder. Part of Norway was first seized after the united Danes and Swedes had defeated and slain King Olaf Trygvessön at the great battle of Svolde (1000); and, between 1028 and 1035, Canute the Great added the whole kingdom to his own; but the union did not long survive him. Equally short-lived was the Danish dominion in England, which originated in a great Viking expedition of King Sweyn I to replenish his depleted exchequer, and had important social consequences for Denmark, inasmuch as Canute the Great, impressed by the superior civilisation of the West, promoted Christian culture in his Scandinavian dominions by introducing foreign clerics. He was also the first to found monasteries in Denmark. Canute moreover greatly strengthened the monarchy by establishing the *Vederlag*, or *Danehof*, originally an assembly of magnates, lay and clerical, bound to the king by oath, who, in return for certain privileges, engaged to render him military service. Gradually the *Vederlag* came to include all the great landed proprietors, and so grew into a *Rigsforsamling*, or National Assembly.

The period between the death of Canute the Great and the accession of Valdemar I (1035–1157) was a troublous time for Denmark. The kingdom was harassed almost incessantly, and more than once partitioned by pretenders to the throne, who did not scruple to invoke the interference of the neighbouring monarchs, and even of the heathen Wends, who established themselves for a time on the southern islands. Yet, throughout this chaos one thing made for future stability, and that was the growth and consolidation of a national Church, which culminated in the erection of the archbishopric of Lund (circa 1104) and the consequent ecclesiastical independence of Denmark. The third archbishop of Lund, Absalon (1128–1201), was Denmark's first great statesman. His genius materially assisted Valdemar I (1157–1181) and Canute VI (1182–1202) to reestablish the Danish monarchy. The most pressing danger came from the Wends, who, after long years of strife, were utterly routed by Absalon on the isle of Rügen (1184), which was added to Denmark. The policy of Absalon was continued on a still vaster scale by Canute VI's younger brother and ultimate successor, Valdemar II (1202–1241), who, already, as duke of Sleswick, had valiantly defended the southern boundaries of the realm against the Germans, and, by the conquest of Holstein, extended the limits of Denmark to the Elbe. As king, Valdemar II, taking advantage of German anarchy, raised Denmark to the rank of a great power, subduing all the German and Wendish territories on the shores of the Baltic; whilst by the famous crusade of 1219 he even conquered Estonia, a useless and costly possession to distant Denmark. And then this vast empire suddenly collapsed. Valdemar's vassal, Count Henry of Schwerin, surprised his master at Lyö (1223) and carried him captive to Germany, whence he emerged only by the surrender of all his German conquests and the payment of a heavy ransom. An attempt to recover his empire was frustrated by the crushing defeat of Bornhöved (1227); and henceforth

Valdemar, no longer "the Victorious," devoted himself exclusively to internal administration and judicial reforms, well deserving the epithet "Legislator" bestowed upon him by his grateful subjects.

The period of the Valdemars marks a turning-point in Danish history. The ancient patriarchal system was merging into a more complicated development of separate estates. The monarchy, now dominant, and far wealthier than before, rested upon the support of the great nobles, many of whom held their lands by feudal tenure, and constituted the royal *Raad* or Council. The clergy, fortified by royal privileges, had also risen to influence; but celibacy and independence of the civil courts tended to make them more and more of a separate caste. Education was spreading. Numerous Danes, lay as well as clerical, regularly frequented the University of Paris, with beneficial results. There were signs too of the rise of a vigorous *Bourgeoisie*, due to the development of the natural resources (chiefly fisheries and cattle-rearing) and the foundation of guilds, the oldest of which, the *Edslag* of Sleswick, dates from the middle of the twelfth century. The *Bonder*, or yeomen, were prosperous and independent, with well-defined rights. Danish territory extended over 68,000 sq. kilms., or nearly double its present area; the population was about 700,000; and 160,000 men and 1400 ships were available for national defence.

Sweden and Norway also were beginning to feel the benefit of a centralised monarchical government. In the former country the Swedes and Goths were united under Sverker I (1134); and for the next hundred years each of the two nations supplied the common king alternately. Eric IX (1150-60) organised the Swedish Church on the model prevalent elsewhere, and undertook a crusade against the heathen Finlanders, which marks the beginning of Sweden's over-sea dominion. Under Charles VII, the archbishopric of Upsala was founded (1164); but the greatest medieval statesman of

Sweden was Earl Birger, who practically ruled the land from 1248 to 1266. To him is attributed the foundation of Stockholm; but he is best known as a legislator, and his wise reforms prepared the way for the abolition of serfdom.

After the death, at the battle of Stiklastad (1030), of Olaf II, who completed the Christianising of Norway begun by Olaf I, that kingdom passed for a time under the Danish sceptre, but, in 1035, Olaf's exiled son, Magnus the Good, was summoned from Russia to ascend his father's throne. He was succeeded by his son Harold Haardraade, whose family reigned till 1130. Then ensued a long period of civil discord, resulting for a time in absolute anarchy, till order was restored by King Haco IV, who was crowned by a papal legate in 1246, and did much for the Church during his long reign (1217–63). Under him Iceland and Greenland were incorporated with Norway. Haco's son, Magnus, was obliged to retrocede the Hebrides and Man to Scotland; but his wise internal administration did much to heal the wounds of the kingdom, and as a legislator (hence his epithet *Lagabôte*) he was not inferior to Valdemar II or Earl Birger.

Denmark, meanwhile, had sunk low indeed. On the death of Valdemar II a period of disintegration ensued. Valdemar's son, Eric Plovpenning, succeeded him as king; but his brother and near kinsfolk also received huge appanages, and family discords led to civil wars. Through the whole of the 13th and part of the 14th century the struggle raged between the Danish kings and the Sleswick dukes; and of six monarchs no fewer than three died violent deaths. Superadded to these troubles was a prolonged, if intermittent, struggle for supremacy between the Popes and the Crown, and, still more serious, the beginning of a breach between the kings and the nobles, which had important constitutional consequences. The prevalent disorder had led to general lawlessness, in consequence of which the royal authority had been widely extended; and a strong opposition gradually arose which protested against the

abuses of this authority. In 1282 the nobles extorted from King Eric Glipping the first *Haandfæstung* or charter, which made the *Danehof*, or Great Council, a regular and legitimate branch of the administration, and gave guarantees against further usurpations. Christopher II (1319–1332) was constrained to grant another charter considerably reducing the prerogative, increasing the privileges of the upper classes, and at the same time reducing the burden of taxation. But aristocratic license proved as mischievous as royal incompetence; and on the death of Christopher II the whole kingdom was on the verge of dissolution. Eastern Denmark was in the hands of one magnate; another magnate held Jutland and Fünen in pawn; the dukes of Sleswick were practically independent of the Danish Crown; the Scanian provinces had (1332) surrendered themselves to Sweden.

It was reserved for another Valdemar to reunite and consolidate the scattered members of his ancestral heritage. This prince, the youngest son of Christopher II, chosen king in 1340, possessed, on his accession, little more than north Jutland as the dower of his wife Helvig, daughter of Duke Valdemar of Sleswick; yet on this slender foundation his genius and statecraft gradually raised the most powerful state in Scandinavia. Before the end of 1346 he had recovered Zealand, and, by 1348, the greater part of Fünen and Jutland. In 1360 the anarchical condition of Sweden enabled him to win back the Scanian provinces; and he had already (1346) advantageously sold Estonia to the German Order. All his efforts aimed at the establishment of a strong monarchy; and the pacification sworn at the *Danehof* held at Kalundborg in 1360 was the keystone of the newly-erected kingdom. The last fifteen years of the reign of Valdemar IV were devoted to a policy of conquest. In 1361 he subdued the rich island of Gothland, and thus came into collision with the powerful Hanse League. In the middle of the 13th century, the privileges which had been conceded to Lübeck alone were likewise

extended to the so-called Wendish towns¹, whose unscrupulous competition had hampered Danish trade and prevented the development of an energetic merchant class, which might have proved a counterpoise to the nobility. The League naturally regarded the conquest of Gothland as an act of war. At a Hansetag held at Cologne in 1367, seventy of the towns concerted to attack Denmark, and succeeded in extorting, by the Treaty of Stralsund, 1370, humiliating conditions of peace from Valdemar, though ultimately he contrived to render illusory many of the advantages so gained. He was also able, shortly before his death in 1375, to recover the greater part of Holstein.

With Valdemar IV the male line of Sweyn Estridsson became extinct; but it was reserved for Valdemar's daughter, Margaret, queen of Haco VI, of Norway, to bring about a union of the three northern kingdoms, temporary indeed, but pregnant with consequences which were profoundly to influence the history of Scandinavia for centuries. The way had already been prepared for such a confederation by the first union between Sweden and Norway in 1319, when the three-year-old Magnus, son of the Swedish royal duke Eric and of the Norwegian princess Ingeborg, who had inherited the throne of Norway from his grandfather Haco V, son of Magnus Lagaböte, was in the same year elected king of Sweden likewise. This arrangement was known as the Convention of Oslo. A long minority weakened the royal influence in both countries; and Magnus lost his kingdoms before his death. Norway he was forced to surrender to his son, Haco VI, in 1343; and the Swedes, irritated by his misrule, superseded him by his own nephew, Albert of Mecklenburg, in 1365, but not before he had carried through the unpopular marriage of his son Haco with Margaret, the Danish king's daughter (1363). In Sweden, moreover, the feeble monarch's partialities and

¹ Rostock, Greifswald, Wismar, and Stralsund.

necessities led directly to the rise of a powerful landed aristocracy enriched by his indiscriminate favours, and indirectly to the growth of popular liberties. Forced by the unruliness of the magnates in his latter days to lean upon the middle classes, he summoned, in 1359, the first Swedish *Riksdag*, or Parliament, on which occasion representatives from the towns were invited to appear before the king along with the nobles and clergy. His successor, Albert, was compelled to go a step further, and, in 1371, to give the first Swedish *Konungaförsäkran*, or, as we should say, take the first coronation oath.

Margaret's first act after her father's death was to procure the election as king of Denmark, under her own regency, of her infant son Olaf, who had already (1380) succeeded his father, Haco VI, as king of Norway. Olaf himself died, however, in 1387; and in the following year (1388) Margaret, who had ruled both kingdoms in his name, was chosen regent of Norway and Denmark. In 1388, responding to the invitation of the Swedes, she defeated their king, Albert of Mecklenburg, at the battle of Falköping, and drove him into exile. Thereupon, at a convention of the representatives of the three northern kingdoms, held at Kalmar, Margaret's great nephew, Eric of Pomerania, a youth of fifteen, was elected the common king, although Margaret continued to hold the reins of government till her death. Simultaneously an agreement, the so-called Union of Kalmar, was arrived at for the closer union in future, under a common monarch, of the three realms, each of which was, nevertheless, to retain its independence¹.

In any case Denmark was bound to be the gainer, and the only gainer, by the Union of Kalmar. Her population was double that of the two other kingdoms combined, besides being far less scattered; and her adventurous nobility welcomed a political compact which led the way to fat benefices and rich emoluments. Neither Margaret nor her successors observed

¹ The actual deed embodying the terms of union never got beyond the stage of an unratified draft.

the stipulation that in each country only natives should hold land and high office ; and it is remarkable that, while many Danish and even German nobles received fiefs and sinecures in Sweden and Norway, the converse very seldom occurred. Nevertheless during Margaret's lifetime the system worked fairly well. The great queen inherited her father's genius, and was an ideal despot. The *Danehoffer*, or national assemblies, fell into abeyance; membership of the *Rigsraad*, or Senate, became a mere state decoration; and court officials, acting as superior clerks, superseded the ancient dignitaries. On the other hand, law and order were well maintained ; the license of the nobility was sternly repressed ; and many of the alienated royal domains were recovered by the Crown. Margaret also succeeded in regaining the greater part of Sleswick by barter or purchase. Her pupil and successor, Eric of Pomerania, was unequal to the burden of empire. He was violent where she had been strong, and speedily embroiled himself not only with his neighbours but with his own subjects. The Hanse League, whose political ascendancy had been shaken by the Union, though it still retained its commercial privileges, enraged by Eric's efforts to bring in the Dutch as rivals, as well as by the establishment of the Sound tolls, materially assisted the Holsteiners in their twenty-five years' war with Denmark (1410-1435); but they were twice repulsed from Copenhagen. Meanwhile Eric himself was deposed (1439) in favour of his cousin, Christopher of Bavaria, who terminated the long Sleswick struggle by conferring the Duchies upon Count Adolphus of Holstein and his heirs.

The deposition of Eric of Pomerania marks another turning-point in Danish history. It was the act not of the people but of the Rigsraad, or Council of State, which had inherited the authority of the ancient Danehof, and after the death of Margaret grew steadily in power at the expense of the Crown. As the government thus grew more and more aristocratic, the position of the peasantry steadily deteriorated.

It is under Christopher that we first hear, for instance, of the *Vornedskab*, or patriarchal control of the landlords in the Danish islands over their tenants, a system which degenerated into rank slavery. In Jutland also, after the repression, in 1441, of a *jacquerie*, caused by the intolerable oppression of the landowners, something very like serfdom was introduced.

On the death of Christopher without heirs, the Rigsraad, after conferring with Duke Adolphus of Sleswick, elected his nephew, Count Christian of Oldenburg, king; but Sweden preferred Karl Knutsson, who reigned as Charles VIII, while Norway finally combined with Denmark at the Conference of Halmstad, 1450. This double election practically terminated the Union, though an agreement was come to that the survivor of the two kings should reign over all three kingdoms. Norway subsequently threw in her lot definitively with Denmark; and indeed by this time that ancient kingdom was incapable of standing alone. Dissension resulting in interminable civil wars had, even before the Union, exhausted the limited resources of the poorest of the three northern realms; and her ruin was completed by the ravages of the Black Death, which wiped out two-thirds of her population. The Hanse League, moreover, powerful everywhere, was absolutely dominant in Norway; and its great emporium at Bergen had become, ever since the middle of the fourteenth century, the principal centre for the export trade of Scandinavia. Unfortunately, too, for Norway's independence, the native gentry had gradually died out, and were succeeded by immigrant Danish fortune-hunters; native burgesses there were none, and the peasantry were mostly thralls; so that, if we except the clergy, headed by the archbishop, there was no patriotic class to stand up for the national liberties, especially as the first unional kings were Germans whose interests lay elsewhere and who had nothing in common with the people.

Far otherwise was it with the wealthier kingdom of Sweden. Here the Church and part of the nobility were favourable to the

Union; but the vast majority of the people hated it as a foreign usurpation. The national party was represented by the three great *Riksforestandere*, or governors, of the Sture family, Sten, Svante, and Sten the younger, who successively defended the independence of Sweden against the Danish kings, and kept the national spirit alive. Matters were still further complicated by the continued interference of the Hanse League in the struggle; and both Christian I (1448–1481) and his successor Hans (1481–1513), whose chief merit it is to have founded the Danish fleet, were, during the greater part of their reigns, only nominally kings of Sweden. On the other hand Sleswick-Holstein now became a component part of the Danish realm; for, on the death of Duke Adolphus of Holstein in 1460, the nobility of the Duchies elected Christian I as their lord, on condition that the two Duchies should remain eternally united. Hans, Christian I's successor, also received in fief the territory of Ditmarsch from the Emperor, but, in attempting to subdue his new possession, suffered a crushing defeat (1500), which led to a successful rebellion in Sweden, and a long and ruinous war with Lübeck, terminated by the Peace of Malmö, 1512, on terms advantageous to Denmark. It was during this war that a strong Danish fleet dominated the Baltic, for the first time since the age of the Valdemars. In the following year (1513) Hans died, and was succeeded by his son Christian II, with whose epoch-making reign the modern period of Scandinavian history may be said to begin.

CHAPTER II.

CHRISTIAN II OF DENMARK, 1513-1532.

IMMEDIATELY after the death of King Hans at Aalborgshus, his son Christian demanded a formal oath of homage and fealty from the Rigsraad assembled there. The demand was just and reasonable. When Christian was still six years old (1487) the Rigsraad had solemnly promised him the succession to the throne, and this promise had been confirmed in 1497; he had received a similar assurance from the Norwegian Raad two years later; while in Sweden, in 1499, allegiance had been sworn to him personally at Stockholm, and he had made his royal circuit through the land. The union of the three northern kingdoms seemed therefore about to be revivified in his person.

The new king was no ordinary mortal. As viceroy of Norway (1506-1512) he had already displayed a singular capacity for ruling under exceptionally difficult circumstances. He had vigorously upheld the royal authority, substituted trustworthy Danish for shifty Norse dignitaries, and repressed rebellion with pitiless severity; but he had also curtailed the extravagant privileges of the Hanse League at Bergen and other places, to the distinct benefit of his Norwegian subjects. Patriotism, insight, courage, statesmanship, energy—these great qualities were indisputably his; but unfortunately they were vitiated by obstinacy, suspicion, and a sulky craftiness beneath

which simmered a very volcano of revengeful cruelty. Another peculiarity, more fatal to him in that aristocratic age than any other, was his fondness for the common people. A curious accident which befell the young prince in 1507 or 1509 made this peculiarity predominant.

One day the king's Norwegian chancellor, Archbishop Eric Valkendorf, strolling through Bergen, was attracted by two women in a baker's booth, one of them a sprightly matron, and the other a young girl of extraordinary loveliness. He stopped and spoke to the matron, who struck him as more than usually intelligent. She was a Dutchwoman, Sigbrit by name; and the daughter was called Dyveke¹. The chancellor, knowing that "the king was in the highest degree an admirer of beauty," informed Christian of his adventure; and Dyveke was invited to a ball which the king gave to the burgesses of the town. Christian fell in love with the Dutch beauty at first sight, and danced with her all the evening; "but in that dance," caustically remarks the old chronicler, Arild Hvitfeld, "he danced away the three kingdoms of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden." The same night Dyveke became the king's mistress. He thereupon established both mother and daughter in a commodious stone house at Oslo², and, on the death of his father, took them both with him to Copenhagen.

Such then was the prince who, in July 1513, met the brilliant assembly which had been summoned to Copenhagen to confirm his succession and receive his royal pledges in exchange. The gathering was numerous and splendid. It comprised the Danish Rigsraad and nobility, the greater part of the Norwegian Rigsraad headed by Archbishop Valkendorf, nine members of the Swedish Riksråd, and deputies from the Wendish towns and the cities of Holland, Zealand, and Friesland. An uneasy feeling prevailed at this Herredag. Everyone felt that a new era had begun, that a vigorous personality had seized

¹ Little dove.

² Christiania now covers the site of Oslo.

the reins of power, that they had to do with a ruler who had already shown in Norway that he was not afraid of enforcing his authority to the uttermost. Every class had its own especial misgivings. The clergy resented his violation of their privileges in Norway, where, disregarding the remonstrances of the archbishop, the Pope, and his own father, he had long kept Karl, bishop of Hamar, confined in a dungeon: for this offence he had to receive absolution before he could be crowned. The nobility dreaded a closer connexion between the sovereign and the non-noble classes; while the lower estates looked up to the "eagle from the Norse mountains," who was their natural protector against the violence of the lesser birds of prey, the flocks of noble hawks, who, in the words of the famous old "eagle song" composed some ten years later:

"Would drive the wee birdies from out of the wood,
And tear out their feathers and down."

No wonder then if the Herredag of 1513 met in an atmosphere of suspicion; no wonder if its resolutions were for the more part protective and provisional. To begin with, the Swedish delegates could not be prevailed upon to accept Christian as king. "We have," they said, "the choice between peace at home and strife here, or peace here and civil war at home, and we prefer the former." A decision as to the Swedish succession was therefore postponed. For the sake of peace it was also agreed that both the Hanse and the Dutch towns should enjoy free trade with Sweden. But the fiercest debates turned upon the joint charter to be granted by the king to his Danish and Norwegian subjects. Christian finally agreed to increase the authority of the Danish gentry over their peasants, and to exclude the mercantile classes from the higher offices of state, except in Norway, where Danes of all classes, and even aliens like Sigbrit's brother Herman, then commandant of the fortress of Bergenhus, held some of the principal posts. Moreover the two Rigsraads insisted that the Crowns

of both kingdoms were elective, not hereditary, expressly reserving to themselves a free choice of Christian's successor after his death. The concluding paragraph of the charter declared that the document was a contract between king and people, and provided explicitly that if the king transgressed the charter and subsequently refused to listen to the "remonstrances"¹ of the Rigsraads, they should be at liberty to adopt preventive measures accordingly.

Thus at last Christian II was acknowledged as sovereign, if with somewhat restricted powers, in all the northern lands except Sweden. As yet the eagle had not swept down upon the hawks. On the contrary, during the vexatious negotiations with the Raads, Christian had shown singular self-restraint. But he had already formed vast plans for the future, including the subjection of Sweden, the humiliation of the Hansa, and the establishment of Copenhagen as the chief emporium of the Baltic. But in the background was the cardinal question of the succession, which was to be the keystone of the whole future edifice. Lest his uncle, Duke Frederick of Holstein (whose homage Christian had received on October 18, 1513, on very onerous conditions), should inherit the throne, the new king must marry. Dyveke was enough for his happiness, but not enough for his ambition.

Shortly after his accession Christian II had successfully negotiated a marriage with a princess of the House of Habsburg. It was the proudest match that any Scandinavian king had hitherto contracted. The bride was Isabella of Burgundy, the granddaughter of the Emperor Maximilian, now in her thirteenth year. Such a union would necessarily strengthen the king's position; and its very conception points to far-reaching aims on his part. The marriage contract was drawn up at Linz by the Emperor and the king's representative, Godske Ahlefeld, bishop of Sleswick. The bride's dowry was fixed at

¹ Lit. "Instructions" (*Undervisning*).

250,000 gulden, a large sum for those times. On Sunday, June 11, 1514, the same day as that on which Christian II was crowned at Copenhagen, he was married by proxy to the princess at Brussels; but, in view of the bride's youth, her journey to Denmark was postponed till the following year, and in 1515 Archbishop Valkendorf was sent with a fleet to the Netherlands to bring her home. Meanwhile, however, tidings of the king's *liaison* with Dyveke had reached the court of Brussels; and there were some painful negotiations on the subject between the archbishop and the chancellor of the Netherlands, Queen Isabella's old tutor, who subsequently ascended the papal throne as Adrian VI. Only with difficulty could Christian be induced even to make believe to put Dyveke away. On August 9, after a tempest-tossed voyage, Isabella landed on Danish soil; and the royal wedding took place three days later.

The girl-queen was no beauty, but her gentleness and amiability quickly won all hearts. At first, she did not please a consort old enough to be her father. The *liaison* with Dyveke continued, and caused much ill-feeling both in Denmark and the Netherlands. In the spring of 1516 arrived ambassadors both from the Emperor and from Brussels, insisting upon Dyveke's summary expulsion from the realm; whereupon Christian, in sheer defiance, dismissed and sent home the young queen's Dutch waiting-women, and placed his mistress and her mother in a mansion at Copenhagen, close at hand. A year later (1517) Dyveke died at Elsinore under suspicious circumstances which point to foul play. She is supposed to have eaten some poisoned cherries sent to her by Torben Oxe, governor of Copenhagen, a man of shady antecedents, whose advances she seems to have rejected. At the end of the same year Christian took his revenge. Oxe was arrested by his order, and, after a form of trial so irregular that it can hardly be called a trial at all, was condemned to be beheaded. That the king should thus dare to lay hands upon

a nobleman of bad character was resented by Oxe's peers as a deliberate outrage. Every effort was made to save him. The whole Rigsraad, with the bishops, the papal legate, and the queen herself at its head, pleaded on their knees for the privileged prisoner; but Christian was inexorable, and the same day Oxe was decapitated. The mountain eagle had at last caused his sharp talons to be felt. The execution of Torben Oxe, well deserved if illegally brought about, marks a significant change in Christian's policy. Hitherto he had favoured the nobles: from henceforth his chief counsellor in affairs of State was Dyveke's mother, Sigbrit. This extraordinary woman, of whom we know only that her father's name was Villom and that she came from Amsterdam, must have been a born administrator and a commercial genius of the first order. Christian II had recognised her ability from the outset. He first appointed her controller of the Sound tolls, and ultimately committed to her the whole charge of the finances. In this position she displayed inexhaustible energy and absolute probity; but her hatred of the nobility, to whom she attributed the death of her daughter, induced her to endeavour by all means to supplant the king's ordinary advisers by *protégés* of her own. Nearly every unpopular measure was attributed to the influence of Sigbrit, "the foul-mouthed Dutch sorceress who hath bewitched the king." Moreover, a *bourgeoise* herself, it was Sigbrit's constant policy to elevate the middle classes and extend their influence at the expense of the aristocracy. She soon became the soul of a middle-class inner council which competed with the Rigsraad itself. Kings and princes corresponded with her on state affairs; and, when the queen, a year after Dyveke's death, bore her first son, Sigbrit, who acted as midwife on the occasion, was made Mistress of the Robes.

Meanwhile Christian was preparing for the inevitable war with Sweden. Since 1513 great events had taken place in that country. Jacob Ulfsson, the aged archbishop of Upsala, had

resigned in favour of Gustavus Trolle, who was duly elected by the cathedral chapter and recommended to the Pope by the governor of Sweden, Sten Sture, on condition that the new archbishop first did him homage. Unfortunately these two masterful young men (Trolle was twenty-seven, Sture only twenty-three), who represented respectively the highest ecclesiastical and the highest civil authority in Sweden, had inherited a bitter family feud. To do him justice, the governor was ready to be reconciled with his adversary for the sake of their common country; but the archbishop loved power above all things, and to obtain it he had already entered into secret correspondence with Christian II. The old quarrel between them broke out afresh on the return of Trolle from Rome. He refused to do homage till all his enemies had been punished; whereupon the governor, who in the meantime was soliciting the Crown from the Pope with some prospect of success, besieged him (1516) in his stronghold at Stäke. Christian II, who had already taken measures to isolate Sweden politically by a catena of alliances with England, Scotland, Russia, and the Baltic free towns, now hastened to the relief of the beleaguered archbishop with 4000 mercenaries, but was defeated by Sture and his peasant levies at Vedla, and forced to return to Denmark. By the end of the year Stäke was taken and razed to the ground; and Sture ordered the archbishop to be imprisoned in a monastery at Vesterås. A Riksmöte, or National Assembly, held at Stockholm in 1517 had already declared unanimously that Sweden would never recognise Trolle as archbishop because he had defied the governor and brought the enemy into the land. The war with Denmark was now vigorously renewed. On Midsummer Day, 1518, Christian II appeared before Stockholm and landed an army, but was again defeated by Sten Sture at Brännkyrka, on which occasion the Swedish standard was borne by the governor's young kinsman, Gustavus Vasa. A fruitless six weeks' blockade of the capital ensued, but was terminated by a two years' truce.

Thus Christian had failed a second time. He now had recourse to a characteristically sinister expedient. First he invited the Swedish governor to meet him on board his ship; but Sture, yielding to the entreaties of the magistrates of Stockholm, refused to trust himself in the king's hands. Christian rightly regarded this open distrust as a gross insult, and, had he at once denounced the truce, he would have been well within his rights. Instead of that he offered to meet the governor on land (and consequently under Sture's own protection), on condition that Gustavus Vasa and some other Swedish nobles were delivered up to him as hostages till he returned. The hostages were duly sent: the governor hastened to the appointed tryst and waited two days in vain. Then he learnt that Christian had set sail for Denmark with the hostages as his prisoners, after declaring the truce to be at an end. Full of the shame of a second defeat Christian returned to Copenhagen.

An attempt of the papal legate, Arcimboldus—then on a tour through Scandinavia selling indulgences for the building of St Peter's at Rome—to mediate between the two countries at a Riksdag held at Arboga in December 1518, completely failed, the whole assembly declaring that they would never negotiate with a man who had falsely broken solemn compacts which the very heathen respected. At the same meeting Arcimboldus formally deposed Archbishop Trolle in favour of himself, and induced the chapter of Upsala to petition the Pope to confirm his own election. The legate then set out for Denmark, but was met on the way by the unpleasant intelligence that King Christian had confiscated all his property, including the rich harvest of indulgence-money he had reaped, and issued an order for his arrest. The discomfited legate contrived to escape to Lübeck, where he found a papal bull against Sten Sture and his adherents nailed up on all the church doors. His own secretary, Didrik Slagheck, had revealed all his doings in Sweden to Sigbrit, and thereupon

entered the king's service. Christian himself sent a strong accusation against Arcimboldus to the Pope; but the legate ultimately emerged triumphant from these complications, and died in high honour as archbishop of Milan, his native place.

Christian II had never for a moment abandoned the intention of subduing Sweden. He was making ready for a winter campaign both by sea and land with forces sufficient to overcome all resistance. Both Denmark and Norway were heavily taxed to pay for the large army of mercenaries which the king had collected from every quarter. German landsknechts made up the bulk of the infantry, which also included 2000 Scots and 2000 Frenchmen. At Epiphany, 1520, the main army broke up from Helsingborg. It carried with it a papal bull excommunicating Sten Sture, and laying Sweden under an interdict for the outrages inflicted on Archbishop Trolle. This bull, which the temporal power was called upon to execute, was duly fastened on all the church doors on their way. In the border province of Västergötland Sten Sture had taken up a strong position near Börgerund on Lake Aasunden; and there, on January 19, the two armies clashed. At the very first onset Sture was placed *hors de combat* by a bullet, which killed his horse and wounded him in the thigh. His peasant levies thereupon fled to the wild, mountainous region of Tiveden, where they made another stand but were routed and dispersed (Feb. 1). The mortally wounded governor took to his sledge and posted towards Stockholm, but expired on the ice of Lake Mälare, two days later, in his twenty-seventh year. His sudden death threw everything into confusion. None durst step into his place. A few of the most loyal partisans of his family rallied, indeed, round his young widow, Christina Gyllenstjerna, who held the fortress of Stockholm and would not hear of surrender; but even the stoutest friend of the Stures, Sten's chancellor Matthias, bishop of Strengnäs, regarded further resistance as hopeless and began to negotiate

with the Danish commanders, while Archbishop Trolle, now released from prison, worked indefatigably for Christian II.

Meanwhile, ravaging and burning in its progress through the heart of Sweden, the Danish army, unopposed, was approaching Upsala, where the members of the Swedish Riksråd, or Council of State, had already assembled. The ten senators, in the name of their country and countrymen, consented to render homage to Christian II on condition that the Danish generals, who had full powers to act for the king, promised a full indemnity for the past and guaranteed that Christian should rule Sweden according to Swedish law and custom. This convention was confirmed by the king and the Danish Rigsraad on March 31; but it should be observed that the promised indemnity was only in general terms, and made no reference to the offences against the Church and Archbishop Trolle. Christina Gyllenstjerna, however, refused to recognise it, and exhorted the peasantry to rise in defence of the national liberties which the gentry and the clergy had thus betrayed. The Swedish yeomen accordingly flew to arms; and the Danish victors were suddenly confronted by a formidable popular rising. At Balundås (March 29) the royal troops suffered a severe defeat; whilst on Good Friday (April 6) a strong rustic host, assisted by a force of burgesses from Stockholm, attacked the main Danish army near Upsala. The battle which ensued was the bloodiest of the whole war. Three of the four Danish generals were wounded; the Danebrog, or Danish standard, was more than once in danger; and only by a supreme effort were the valiant yeomen at length beaten off, leaving on the field thousands of dead, whom their own countryman, Archbishop Trolle, allowed to rot without burial because they had heretically assisted his enemies. Christian himself, at the beginning of May, had arrived with the Danish fleet and invested Stockholm by land and sea; but Christina Gyllenstjerna resisted stoutly for more than four months. Not till September 7 would the spirited lady consent to negotiate;

and even then, well aware of the character of Christian and apprehensive of the malign influence of her deadly foe Archbishop Trolle, she took care to exact beforehand an amnesty of the most explicit and absolute character, which was, moreover, to be retrospective and cover all the acts of hostility committed by her husband and herself and their partisans. As it was of even more importance to the king to get possession of Stockholm than for the besieged to surrender it, Christian agreed without reservation to the lady's terms.

On the same day the burgomaster surrendered the keys to Christian II, whereupon he made his state entry into the city. The surrender of the capital paralysed all further resistance. Christian, after a brief visit to Denmark, returned to Stockholm in October, bringing with him his new favourite, Dr Didrik Slagheck; and the whole Råd, the nobility and deputies from all the towns and country places, were summoned to Stockholm to attend his coronation and do him homage. On November 1 the representatives of the nation swore fealty to Christian as hereditary sovereign, notwithstanding that the law of the land distinctly provided that the Swedish Crown should be elective. But Christian's mercenaries, armed to the teeth, stood round the hill of Brunkeberg, where the act of homage took place; and none durst plead the ancient law. And now at last the long desired goal was reached. In Sweden, at any rate, Christian was absolute. On Sunday, November 4, he was anointed by Gustavus Trolle in Stockholm cathedral, and took the usual coronation oath, by which he swore, with his hand on the Bible, to defend the Church and her privileges, love truth and justice, rule the realm through native-born Swedes alone, and abide by the laws of the land. After the coronation numerous Danes and Germans were knighted, the king causing a herald to proclaim that, on this occasion, the Swedes could not be considered because they had fought against him. Then, to impress them still more with his might and majesty, he allowed himself to be invested, before the

High Altar, with the Order of the Golden Fleece by Johan Sacket, the Emperor's special envoy. The next three days were given up to banqueting and other festivities; but on Wednesday, November 7, "an entertainment of another sort began."

On that day all the senators in Stockholm, and a goodly company of all classes, including Christina Gyllenstjerna and some other ladies, were summoned to the great hall of the palace. At 1 o'clock the king entered and sat down on the judgment seat, whereupon Archbishop Trolle advanced, and, reminding Christian of his coronation oath whereby he had sworn to defend the Church and her privileges, demanded the summary punishment of all his personal enemies of the Sture family and their adherents as heretics, inasmuch as they had laid violent hands upon himself and sundry of his fellow bishops, destroyed his stronghold of Stäke, and allowed mass to be sung in Sweden during his imprisonment, contrary to canonical prescription. Dame Christina instantly stepped forward and protested that the alleged acts of violence against the archbishop could not be imputed to her late husband and his friends, inasmuch as they were publicly sanctioned by a national assembly, all of whose members had declared themselves responsible therefor; and, in proof of her statement, she produced the mandate of the Riksmöte of 1517. Neither the king nor the archbishop seems to have had the least idea of the existence of this mandate, which was now read aloud and found to be signed by no fewer than five bishops and almost all the senators present, and to be issued in the name of the Swedish nation. It was as if a bomb-shell had fallen in the midst of the assembly. Exclamations, excuses, protests and explanations broke forth on every side.

Christian thereupon discreetly withdrew to his private room, whither he presently summoned his captains to a secret conference. The result of this conference was quickly apparent. At dusk a band of Danish soldiers, with lanterns and torches, broke into the great hall, and carried off several carefully selected

persons; by 10 o'clock the same evening the remainder of the guests were safely under lock and key in separate apartments: all these persons had been marked down on the archbishop's proscription list. On the following day (Nov. 8) a council of ecclesiastics, held at the palace, under the presidency of Trolle himself, who thus acted as judge in his own cause, solemnly pronounced the proscribed to be manifest heretics for resisting the archbishop's interdict. At 12 o'clock that night the bishops of Strängnäs and Skara, who were not even named in Trolle's list, though they had signed the mandate of 1517, were led out by Didrik Slagheck into the great square and beheaded without even being allowed to see a priest. "He would slay their souls as well as their bodies," cried the indignant crowd. Fourteen noblemen, three burgomasters, fourteen town-councillors, and about twenty common citizens of Stockholm were then drowned or decapitated with similar expedition. The executions continued throughout the following day. In all, about eighty-two people are said to have been thus murdered. The bodies were left in the square till the following Saturday, when they were all thrown in a heap and burnt. Among the slain was Gustavus Vasa's father, Eric Johansson. Christian revenged himself upon the dead as well as upon the living, for Sten Sture's body was dug up and burnt, as well as the body of his little child, who had been born during the interdict. Dame Christina and many other Swedish noble ladies were sent prisoners to Denmark.

It has well been said that the manner of this atrocious deed was even more detestable than the deed itself. Even if the Stockholm massacre had been "the sudden impulse of a tyrant savagely impatient of the constitutional obstacles thrown in his way by a free people," it might find some sort of psychological excuse. It is the dishonesty of the deed which makes it so hideous. Christian suppressed his political opponents under the pretence of defending an ecclesiastical system which in his heart he despised. Even when it became necessary to

make excuses for his crime, we see the same doublemindedness. Thus, while in a proclamation to the Swedish people he represented the massacre as a measure necessary to avoid another papal interdict, in his apology to the Pope for the decapitation of the two innocent bishops he described it as an unauthorised act of vengeance on the part of his own people. Yet Christian does not deserve the whole burden of blame. Archbishop Trolle undoubtedly seized this opportunity unscrupulously to gratify his private vengeance; while Didrik Slagheck had never ceased urging his new master to proceed with the utmost rigour against traitors who were at the same time heretics. Slagheck was immediately rewarded with the vacant see of Skara, and, on the king's departure to Denmark in December, was left behind as stadholder of Sweden with a council in which Archbishop Trolle held a prominent place. The king's return through Sweden was marked by fresh massacres, Christian's last victims being the abbot and monks of Nydala.

It was with his brain teeming with great designs that Christian II returned to his native kingdom. "One of the gates of Lübeck is now taken," he cried, after the surrender of Stockholm. "Soon shall my dogs bark before Gottorp." That the welfare of his dominions was dear to him there can be no doubt. Inhuman as he could be in his wrath, in principle he was as much a humanist as any of his most enlightened contemporaries. But he would do things his own way, and, deeply distrusting the Danish nobles with whom he shared his power, he sought helpers from among the wealthy and practical middle classes of Flanders. In June, 1521, he paid a sudden visit to the Netherlands. He had already had tidings of the Swedish popular rising under Gustavus Vasa, but thought that such a petty affair might safely be left to his lieutenants. Holstein and Lübeck, however, were still to be dealt with. To bring them also beneath the yoke was now the chief aim of his policy. Christian's arrival in the Netherlands caused a great sensation. He was welcomed as one of the

greatest of European princes. In Italy it was whispered that the mighty king had concluded a league with the Emperor against France; and, out of consideration for Charles V, the papal court was disposed to look indulgently upon recent events at Stockholm. Christian himself persuaded his young kinsman to surrender to him Holstein, including Ditmarsch and Hamburg, as a fief, and to recognise his claims upon Lübeck and other German towns. The king remained in the Low Countries for some months. He visited most of the large cities and was much impressed by their superior culture. He took into his service many Flemish artisans, and made the personal acquaintance of Quentin Matsys and Albrecht Dürer, the latter of whom was frequently the king's guest and painted his portrait. Christian also entertained Erasmus, with whom he discussed the Reformation. It was in a conversation with Erasmus that Christian let fall this characteristic expression: "Mild measures are of no use; the remedies that give the whole body a good shaking are the best and surest."

Never had King Christian seemed so powerful as on his return to Denmark on September 5, 1521; and, with the confidence of strength, he at once proceeded recklessly to inaugurate the most sweeping reforms. Soon after his return home Christian issued his great *Landelove*, or Code of Law, for the most part founded on Dutch models, which testifies in a high degree to the king's sense of enlightenment and progress, and in some respects, notably in the extension of state control, anticipates some late nineteenth century theories. Some of these statutes, notably the provisions for the better education of the lower and the restriction of the political influence of the higher clergy, and the stern prohibitions against wreckers and "the evil and unchristian practice of selling peasants as if they were brute beasts," testify to the influence of humanism; but, on the whole, the new code visibly favoured the aggrandisement of the royal authority. The jurisdiction of the bishops was as good as abolished; and the union with Rome was

considerably relaxed. In the towns, too, the election of the burgomasters and council was virtually placed in the hands of the royal bailiffs. The old trade-guilds were retained, but the rules of admittance thereto made easier; and trade combinations of the richer burghers for the purpose of buying up all wares, to the detriment of the smaller tradesmen, were sternly forbidden.

These reforms were, on the whole, excellent, but unfortunately they suggested the standpoint not of an elected ruler, but of a monarch by right divine. Some were even in direct contravention of the charter. The privileged classes regarded the new code with consternation; and the conservative instincts of many of the burgesses and peasants were revolted by its novelty. In some places the peasants, misunderstanding the ordinance which, in case of gross tyranny, permitted them to change their masters, deserted their parishes in scores; while in other places they clamoured to have the old laws back again. Christian's attempt (in 1521) to promote market-gardening by leasing the whole of the isle of Amager, near Copenhagen, to 184 Dutch families, was also deeply resented; and in general the old Scandinavian feeling of independence was deeply wounded by this meddling with both the habits and prejudices of his subjects. Sweden too was now in open revolt; and both Norway and Denmark were taxed to their utmost limits to raise an army for the subjection of the sister kingdom. Under the pretence of a free-will offering an income-tax of 33 per cent. was now imposed on the clergy; and a similar charge was levied on personal property generally.

Foreign complications were now superadded to these domestic troubles. With the laudable and patriotic object of releasing Danish trade from the grinding yoke imposed upon it by the Hansa, and making Copenhagen the great emporium of the north, Christian had arbitrarily raised the Sound tolls, and seized a number of Dutch ships which presumed to evade the tax. Thus his relations with the Netherlands were at least

unfriendly, while with Lübeck and her allies he was now openly at war. The king's commercial policy must in any case have led to a rupture sooner or later; but it was no secret in Lübeck that Christian II meant not only to exclude her from the Baltic trade, but also claimed the suzerainty exercised over her by the Valdemars two centuries before. In August 1522 a large Lübeck fleet, reinforced by ten ships fitted out by Gustavus Vasa, plundered Bornholm, burnt Elsinore, and entered into negotiations with Duke Frederick of Holstein, who had naturally been incensed by Christian's endeavours to seize his Duchy.

Finally, Christian's own subjects rose against him. On December 21, 1522, a number of the Jutland bishops and senators met in conference at Viborg. They posed as the defenders of the old constitution, yet they began with a flagrant breach of it by neglecting to advise or confer with the king before defying his authority, as expressly provided by the charter of July 22, 1513; and, when Christian attempted conciliation by inviting them to attend a Rigsdag at Aarhus, where all complaints were to be considered and all abuses redressed, they, fearful and suspicious, renounced their allegiance and offered the crown to Duke Frederick (Jan. 20, 1523). They were encouraged to persevere in this act of rebellion by their knowledge of the king's overwhelming difficulties, but they were unprepared for his sudden and complete collapse. Christian could still depend on the capital, on the great commercial town of Malmö, and on the people of Sjælland; and his great admiral, Søren Norby, held Finland and Gothland at his disposal; but at the crisis of his fate a strange paralysis seemed to fall upon him. It was as if he had exhausted in ten years the store of energy which was to have served him for a lifetime. Instead of rallying all his resources for a determined struggle, he first lost valuable time in useless negotiations, and then, accompanied by his queen, his three little children, mother Sigbrit (who had to be carried on board in a chest)

and a few devoted adherents, he took ship to seek help abroad instead of trusting in the fidelity of his own subjects. On May 1, 1523, he landed at Veere in Zealand.

Meanwhile the duke of Holstein (March 26) had received the homage of all Jutland at Viborg as Frederick I, and that of the Duchies on April 14. By that time Fünen was already won, and a Lübeck fleet conveyed the new king's chief general, Johan Rantzau, and his young son Duke Christian, to Sjælland. Henrik Gjö, whom Christian had left in command of Copenhagen, unable to prevent the landing, retired within the fortress, which Rantzau invested from the land side, while the Lübeck fleet blockaded it. Malmö, across the Sound, was the only other place which held out for Christian long after the rest of the kingdom had sworn fealty to Frederick I at Roskilde (Aug. 3, 1523). The charter, which Frederick signed on this occasion, made the Rigsraad about equal to the king in power; indeed, as Frederick generally resided at Gottorp, the Council of State became practically his co-regent. In return for the new sovereign's concessions, the Rigsraad promised to elect one of his sons king after his death.

Frederick I was an easy-going, somewhat parsimonious prince of simple tastes and homely habits; but he had the good sense to surround himself with capable men of action, chief among whom were Rantzau and his adroit and supple chancellor Wolfgang von Uttenhof. His position being, from the first, a delicate one, his policy was necessarily a policy of cautious and, on the whole, successful compromise. All immediate danger was removed by the surrender of Copenhagen and Malmö in the earlier part of 1524, and by Frederick's recognition as king in Norway (Nov. 24, 1524), on which occasion he granted the Norwegians a special charter acknowledging the kingdom to be elective. Abroad Christian II continued to be a perpetual menace; and thus Frederick was compelled to seek the support of Lübeck and Sweden, both of them, at best, uncertain allies whom only the fear of Christian

kept together. Moreover his dependence on the upper classes, who had raised him to the throne, speedily made this German king unpopular with the lower classes in Denmark, who now began to regret Christian II, and to regard him as their natural protector. In 1525 there was a dangerous rising of the peasants and burgesses in Scania, stimulated by Christian's admiral, the indefatigable Søren Norby, who for many years dominated the Baltic from the island of Gothland, and made himself equally formidable to Denmark and Sweden by his piracies. This rebellion was suppressed by Johan Rantzau; but, in 1531, a far more serious peril threatened King Frederick's throne. Christian II suddenly appeared in Norway in person.

The earlier years of Christian II's exile had been a period of unrelieved misery. He was coldly received in the Netherlands, could not obtain the payment of the arrears of his wife's dowry, 150,000 gulden, which would have relieved him from his more pressing difficulties, and lived for a time at Lier, in Brabant, the place assigned to him as his residence, in such poverty that he was obliged to sell his wife's jewels and his children's playthings to buy them bread. He amused his enforced leisure by translating the Old Testament into Danish from the version of Luther, whose acquaintance he had made at Wittenberg in 1524. Then his faithful wife died; and his three children were taken from him to be educated in the Roman faith. Only after the Peace of Cambray (1529) did his prospects brighten. It was well known in Germany that the common people both in Jutland and the Danish islands had had enough of aristocratic rule during the last six years, and that their hearts were turning once more towards the old king, who, at any rate, had been good to *them*. Moreover Frederick I's conversion to Lutheranism had alienated from him the Danish burgesses and the Norwegians generally; and when Christian, in 1530, after negotiating with the Catholic hierarchy in Norway, had solemnly undertaken, in two interviews with Charles V, to restore the Catholic faith in Scandinavia, his Imperial kinsman advanced

him the funds for a fresh enterprise. Christian was thereupon absolved from his past offences by a papal legate, and proceeded, with something of his former energy, to collect an army of 10,000 men.

On October 24, 1531, he sailed with his army from Medemblik in Holland; but henceforth misfortune persistently dogged his footsteps. A tempest scattered his fleet; and it was with only some five thousand men that he reached Hestnæs. Yet the situation in Norway was, at first sight, not unfavourable. Many of the leading Norwegian prelates, including the archbishop, Olaf Ingebregtsson, openly declared for him; and he was also joined by Archbishop Gustavus Trolle, Senator Ture Jönsson, and other eminent Swedish refugees. On January 5, 1532, the senators of southern Norway issued a manifesto in his favour, recognising him as king and his eldest son as his successor. But he failed to secure the important fortresses of Akershus and Bohus; and his invasion of Sweden was frustrated by the vigorous defensive measures of Gustavus Vasa. Surprised and vexed at such an unexpected display of force, Christian turned fiercely upon Senator Ture, who had represented Sweden to be friendly and defenceless. "You have betrayed me all along, Herr Ture," cried he. "You told me, for certain, there were no men at arms in Sweden. What be these then? Old women, eh?" "But however that may have been," adds an old chronicler, "it is certain that a few days later Herr Ture was found lying headless one morning in the street of Kunghäll." This characteristic piece of ferocity was Christian's last act of power. On July 1, 1532, at Oslo, he was forced to surrender to Frederick's plenipotentiary, Bishop Knud Gyldenstjerne, who had been sent to Norway with a large Dano-Hanseatic fleet and army. By the Convention of Oslo it was stipulated that Christian, under a safe-conduct, should be conveyed to Copenhagen, there to negotiate personally with his uncle. Under the pretext that Gyldenstjerne had exceeded his instructions, the solemn compact was broken:

and Christian, on his arrival in Denmark, was imprisoned at Sønderborg Castle. Four Danish noblemen were appointed his guardians.

At first the king was entertained liberally in light and spacious apartments in the Blue Tower; but, after he had succeeded in opening communications with the outer world through his favourite dwarf, his confinement became more rigorous. On the death of Frederick I and the outbreak of the "Count's War" in 1533, he was literally "immured" in his room, and orders were given to cut him down if the castle were attacked. An old soldier was now his sole comrade; and the deep dints still visible in the stone floor show how the unhappy king used to take exercise by walking for hours round and round his table. For seven long years this solitary confinement lasted. Even after the Peace of Speyer (1544), whereby Charles V had stipulated that his kinsman should at least have liberty to hunt and fish, these necessary diversions were barbarously denied him for ten years longer, because the pride of his daughters, all three of them actually reigning princesses, would not allow them to relinquish their "hereditary rights." In the beginning of 1549 Christian was transferred to the castle of Kalundborg, and here he was allowed a chaplain and a small sum of money to dispense in alms. He died in January, 1559, aged seventy-seven years, nearly twenty-seven of which were spent in solitary confinement. Indisputably a man of genius, the melancholy failure of Christian II was due rather to moral deficiencies than to overweening ambition. Want of self-restraint, the cardinal vice of his character, speedily isolated him in the midst of capable counsellors and a loyal people. Yet, when all is said, he remains one of the most imposing and pathetic figures in Scandinavian history; and his very crimes are forgotten in the severity of his punishment.

CHAPTER III.

GUSTAVUS VASA OF SWEDEN, 1523-1560.

WE have seen that the fortunes of Christian II foundered, in 1531, on the vigorous resistance opposed to him by Gustavus Vasa on the Norwegian frontier; yet, only eight years before, when young Gustavus, solely supported by the Swedish peasantry, first took up arms against the mighty ruler of three kingdoms, a miracle alone seemed capable of making the adventure a success.

Gustavus Eriksson, the greatest constructive statesman of a dynasty of empire-makers, was born at his mother's estate of Lindholm, on Ascension Day, 1496. He came of a family which had shone conspicuously in fifteenth century politics, though it generally took the anti-national side. His father, Erik Johansson of Rydboholm, "a merry and jocose gentleman," given to boisterous practical joking, but, like all the Vasas, liable to sudden fierce gusts of temper, was an honourable exception to the family tradition, supporting as he did Sten Sture; and he was also one of the senators who voted for the deposition of Archbishop Trolle at the Riksdag of 1517, for which act of patriotism he lost his head in the Stockholm massacre. Gustavus's mother, Cecilia Månsdotter, was closely connected with the Stures by marriage; and the heroic dame, Christina Gyllenstjerna, was her half-sister.

Gustavus's youthful experiences impressed him with a life-long distrust of everything Danish. In his eighteenth year he

was sent to the court of his cousin, Sten Sture, to complete his education. He had there the opportunity not only of exercising himself in deeds of chivalry, but also of learning the first principles of statesmanship in daily intercourse with the most eminent Swedes of the day. We have already seen how, together with five other noble youths, he was delivered as a hostage to King Christian, who treacherously carried him prisoner to Denmark. Yet here the royal trickster overreached himself: this very act of precaution saved Gustavus from the fate of his kinsmen. Gustavus was detained for twelve months in the island fortress of Kalö on the east coast of Jutland, but contrived to escape to Lübeck, in September, 1519. There he found an asylum till May, 1520, when, the magistrates conniving at his escape, he chartered a sloop to Kalmar, one of the few Swedish fortresses which held out against Christian II. It was while hunting in the neighbourhood of Räfsnäs, on Lake Mälare, one of his father's estates, that the news of the Stockholm massacre was brought to him by a peasant fresh from the capital, who told him, at the same time, that a price had been set upon his own head. In his extremity Gustavus saw only one way of deliverance: he resolved to appeal for help to the sturdy yeomen of the Dales.

Dalarna, or "the Dales," is the name given to that portion of central Sweden which lies in the basin of the Dal, and round about the chain of lakes formed by that river and its confluents. It is a rugged, mountainous, sylvan region, rich in minerals; and its inhabitants, *Dalkartarne*, or "the Dalesmen," are to this day the sturdiest and most capable race in the kingdom. From the earliest times they had played a leading part in Swedish history, always ready at a day's notice to rise in defence of their own and the national liberties, under leaders fortunate enough to win their confidence. Moreover they had steadily supported the governors of the Sture family, and were the protagonists in all the battles fought against the Danish invaders. It was in this nursery of patriotism that

young Gustavus Eriksson now hoped to find an asylum and an army.

On St Catherine's Day, November 25, 1520, he rode forth from Räfsnäs on his hazardous quest. Dismounting at the first farm-house he came to, he donned a peasant costume and a round Dale-hat, and set off on foot with an axe over his shoulder. Feeling his way along, he took service with an old college friend, Anders Persson of Rankhytta, who, for all his sympathy, durst not assist him, but sent him on to Squire Arendt Persson of Arnflykt, who, eager to win King Christian's favour and the advertised reward, betrayed his guest to the nearest Danish bailiff. Gustavus was saved from capture only by the prompt assistance of Arendt's wife, Barbara, who sent him off in a sledge. But the alarm had already been given; and the fugitive was hunted like a wild beast, sometimes hiding in trusses of hay, at other times sleeping under forest trees. Wearied out and half starved, he came at length to Rättvik on Lake Siljan, in the very heart of the Dales, and here, amidst a patriotic population, he imagined he could come forward boldly. But neither here nor in the adjacent mining centre of Mora could he rouse the peasantry to arms. They protected him, indeed, against his pursuers, but refused to follow him. They had no confidence in the solitary young fugitive. They were weary of the long war; and the terrible overthrow at Upsala (p. 21) was still fresh in their memories. Not even the tidings of the Stockholm massacre could overcome their apathy. All Gustavus's eloquence was in vain: his mission seemed to be an utter failure.

Then it was that Christian himself unwittingly helped his rival. During his return journey to Denmark through Sweden, in 1520-21, he did two things which touched the Swedish yeomanry to the quick. At Nyköping, on December 10, 1520, an order was issued that all the peasants should deliver up their bows and cross-bows; and at the same time a fresh tax was imposed on agricultural produce, to be levied in kind.

The same month in which the first of these ordinances was proclaimed the farmers of East Småland rose in revolt. The tidings spread rapidly to the Dales; and with it came the rumour that King Christian meant to ride his Eriksgatta¹ through Sweden, and had ordered a gallows to be erected at every manor-house beforehand. Alarmed by these reports, the Dalesmen sent several swift runners through the forests after Gustavus to bring him back. Travelling day and night they overtook him and easily persuaded him to return to Mora. Thither the chief men of the surrounding districts assembled, in the beginning of January, 1521, elected Gustavus "Lord and Captain of the Dales and the Commonwealth of Sweden," and swore fealty and obedience to him. The rising was popular; and, by Lent, Gustavus had four hundred armed men about him. The necessary funds for fresh operations were obtained by plundering the German chapmen of Koffarberget; and his forces soon swelled to fifteen hundred men. All the southern Dales now joined him; and the inhabitants of the neighbouring province of Helsingland were invited to cooperate. The men of Helsingland, however, would give no definite answer, but preferred to bide their own time and await events; whereas the men of Gestrikland, the coast province of the Dales, joyfully acceded to Gustavus, who thereby obtained possession of Gefle, the chief port of the district. It was shortly after this that companies of gentlemen, who had escaped from the Danes, began to come to him; and their numbers increased daily.

Hitherto the Danish government at Stockholm had thought it sufficient to admonish the Dalesmen to return to their obedience, but severer measures now seemed necessary; and in April a force of six thousand men, consisting of Danes, Germans, Scotch, and French mercenaries, set out from the neighbouring fortress of Vesterås to quell the rising. Arch-

¹ Lit. "the circuit through the land." The old custom of the Swedish kings to ride through the land to administer summary justice.

bishop Trolle and Didrik Slagheck were two of the leaders. They encamped south of the river Dal, at Brunbäck ferry; while from the other side advanced a numerous peasant host under Peder Svensson. On perceiving the superiority of the enemy, Bishop Beldenak, the most astute of the Danish prelates, asked the Swedish lords how such a large number of men could find sustenance. He was told that the common people of Sweden were not used to delicacies. "They drink little but water, and, when hard put to it, are quite content with bark bread" "Well," replied Beldenak, "they who can eat wood and drink water, will not yield to the Devil himself, much less to mere men. My brethren, let us be off at once." The retreat began; but the Dalesmen followed hot upon the heels of the invaders, and compelled them to stand and fight. After a severe struggle, the Danes were defeated and fell back upon Vesterås. Encouraged by this success, Gustavus (April 29, 1521) advanced against Vesterås itself. It was not his intention to engage the enemy there; but Slagheck's impetuosity precipitated another contest. No sooner did the Swedes appear than he ordered his cavalry to charge; and they fell forthwith upon the peasant squadrons, hoping to trample them down. But the peasants stood firm and received the horsemen with outstretched pikes. Every attempt to break their serried ranks failed; and the Danish cavalry were finally driven back with the loss of four hundred men and all their artillery—a great gain for Gustavus, who had no guns. A few weeks later Christian's generals considered it safest to return to Stockholm.

By the end of April Gustavus was master of the Dales, Gestrikland, Vestmanland, and Nerike, in other words of all central Sweden except the province of Upland, doubly important from its proximity to the capital and its inclusion of the archiepiscopal city of Upsala. Upsala was captured by a peasant host, under Lars Eriksson and Lars Olsson, in the beginning of May; and three weeks later Gustavus presented

himself before the cathedral chapter, and asked the canons whether he was to regard them as Swedes or Danes. The canons thereupon craved leave to consult the archbishop; and Gustavus not only consented to this but himself wrote to the deadly enemy of his house, exhorting him to forget family feuds in the interest of their common country. Trolle's only reply to this eirenicon was an unsuccessful attempt to surprise Gustavus at Upsala. A few weeks later Gustavus himself was strong enough to undertake the siege of Stockholm. But it was now that his real difficulties began. In the open field he had carried everything before him, but nearly all the strong places were in the hands of the Danes; and, as Gustavus had no other means of reducing them except by famine, which, in the case of Stockholm and other sea-girt fortresses was an almost hopeless task for lack of a fleet, progress in this war of sieges was necessarily slow. It must also not be forgotten that Gustavus's forces were mostly undisciplined peasants, obliged from time to time to return home to till their fields and reap their crops, leaving still rawer recruits in their places. So poor indeed was he in regular troops that the accession of sixty landsknechts from Dantzig, in July, was considered a notable reinforcement.

Fortunately the dissensions of his enemies somewhat relieved his difficulties. It had become evident that the Danish stadtholder, Didrik Slagheck, was unequal to the situation; and his coadjutors, Archbishop Trolle and Bishop Beldenak, hated and despised the brutal blunderer. After the defeat of Vesterås, they complained of his incompetence to Christian II, and even induced their colleague, for form's sake, to go to prison for a short time, so that their government might be less unpopular. Trolle then proclaimed himself governor of Sweden, and summoned a so-called Riksdag of reconciliation to meet at Stockholm; but the scheme fell through. Much more effective was the "General Assembly of all classes," simultaneously convoked by Gustavus, which met at Vadstena

on August 21, and greatly strengthened his hands by encouraging "The Lord-Governor of the Swedish Commonwealth" to continue as he had begun, and promising him their utmost support. The war of liberation was now prosecuted with fresh energy. In the course of 1520 and 1521 nearly all the Swedish fortresses were recovered; but the siege of Stockholm, ably defended by Didrik Slagheck's capable brother, Henrik, and repeatedly reinforced and reprovisioned from the sea by Sören Norby, still dragged wearily on.

At length Gustavus, perceiving that his own resources were unequal to reducing the place, applied for aid to Lübeck, which was equally interested in opposing the Imperial policy of Christian II. He could not have chosen a more favourable time. Lübeck, well aware of Christian's intrigues against her during his secret visit to the Netherlands, was actually preparing for war; and her old rival, Dantzig, who had similar grievances against the Danish king, took the same side. On March 15, 1522, both cities agreed to assist Gustavus; and, on May 30, ten warships, with numerous German landsknechts and horsemen on board, left Travemünde and arrived at Söderköping on June 7. Stockholm was now completely blockaded; and, after the repulse of a determined attempt to relieve it, in November, by the indefatigable Sören Norby, the surrender of the city could be only a question of time.

Meanwhile Christian himself had quitted Denmark; and the news of his flight had no sooner reached Sweden than Gustavus, in the beginning of June, summoned a *Riksmöte*, or National Assembly, to Strengnäs, consisting not merely of senators, prelates, and nobles, but of representatives from the towns and country parishes. The first business of the assembly was to fill the places in the Råd, or Senate, rendered vacant by the Stockholm massacre. A couple of days later (June 6, 1523), Canon Knut of Vesterås delivered a Latin oration in which he demonstrated the necessity of electing a king, and, at the same time, declared that none was so worthy of that high office as

"the Governor Herr Gustavus Eriksson." Knut's proposition was received with unanimous applause; only Gustavus himself raised objections; and there can be no question that he was thoroughly sincere. He was weary, he said, of the heavy burden he had already taken upon himself, and begged to be relieved of it. Let them elect one of the older senators, and he would be the first to render him homage and obedience. But everyone recognised that Gustavus was indispensable, and they persisted in their entreaties till he yielded. Then, in the name of the Most Holy Trinity, Gustavus Eriksson was proclaimed "King of the Swedes and Goths." The election was duly notified by the Senate "to all men who love and seek the truth." In this document, a copy of which was sent to the principal European potentates, Christian II's conduct in Sweden and the reason of his expulsion were set forth clearly and circumstantially. At the same time Archbishop Trolle was outlawed and forbidden to return to Sweden.

Yet, at the very assembly which elected him king, Gustavus learnt, as he himself expressed it, that the office of ruler "hath more gall than honey in it." The deputies from Lübeck present at the Riksmöte demanded of the newly elected king the renewal and enlargement of their privileges in return for the assistance they had rendered to him against Christian II. The privileges thus claimed practically placed the whole trade of Sweden, toll-free, in the hands of the Hansa. Gustavus saw only too well the detriment which would thence ensue to the realm, but he was helpless. The sum he owed to Lübeck for ships and muniments of war was considerable; and he had no means of repaying it. Moreover, further help from Lübeck was required in order to take Stockholm; and the plenipotentiaries of that powerful city threatened that, if their demands were not promptly complied with, they would make their own terms with Gustavus's competitor, Frederick I, the new king of Denmark, who had already offered them all their old privileges in the three

northern kingdoms. With an aching heart the young king felt compelled to agree to conditions so rigorous that some of his own councillors refused to sign the treaty. On June 10, 1523, a royal brief conceded all the demands of Lübeck.

The day after the close of the Riksmöte, June 20, 1523, Stockholm opened her gates to Gustavus. Twice in three years the Swedish capital had endured the privations of a long siege. Most of the houses were in ruins or tenantless; and the numbers of the taxpaying burgesses had sunk in four years from 1200 to 308. To repair the loss Gustavus resorted to an expedient not uncommon in those times. Burgesses selected from every town in Sweden were ordered forthwith to repair to Stockholm and reside permanently there, under heavy penalties in case of disobedience. The strong fortress of Kalmar had surrendered shortly before Stockholm; and, by the end of 1523, all Finland was also subdued by Gustavus's generals, Erik and Ivar Fleming. The war of liberation being now over, the foreign mercenaries were superfluous; but, as Gustavus had no money to pay them off, he was obliged to send them to Lübeck to be discharged there by the city authorities. In return for this service, however, the Lübeckers demanded such an enormous sum of money that Gustavus could pay off a first instalment of it only by selling the spare chalices, monstrances, and other treasures of the Swedish churches and monasteries.

This was only the beginning of those economical difficulties with which Gustavus had to contend from the beginning to the end of his reign, difficulties which frequently threatened completely to overwhelm even his strenuous energy and dogged perseverance. The financial position of the Crown was the most important of all the problems demanding solution, for upon that everything else depended. By releasing his country from the tyranny of Denmark Gustavus had made the free, independent development of Sweden a possibility. It was for him to realise that possibility. First of all, order had to be

evolved from the chaos in which Sweden had been plunged by the disruption of the Union; and the shortest, perhaps the only way thereto was to restore the royal authority, which had been in abeyance during ninety years. But an effective, reforming monarchy must stand upon a sound financial basis; and to establish such a basis was, under the circumstances, an herculean task. For the usual revenues of the Crown, always inadequate, were so diminished that they did not cover half the daily expenses of government, and left no surplus whatever for the payment of the grinding national debt—another heritage of the Union. New taxes could be imposed only with extreme caution while the country was still bleeding from the wounds of the long war; and, in any case, the limits of taxation, in so poor a country as Sweden, would very speedily be reached. It was clear that extraordinary expedients must, sooner or later, be adopted. Men were wanted even more than money. The lack of capable, trustworthy administrators in Sweden, just when they were most required, was grievous.

The whole burden of government weighed exclusively on the shoulders of the new king, a young man of seven-and-twenty. He had to see to everything personally, and act on information which he could trust none to collect but himself. Half his time was taken up in travelling from one end of the kingdom to the other, and doing purely clerical work for want of competent assistance. Gustavus was, in very deed, not merely Sweden's king, but Sweden's most overworked servant. His officers did literally nothing without first consulting him; and his care extended to everything, from the building of a smithy to the construction of a fleet, from the translation of the Scriptures to the reformation of the Church. We can form some idea of his difficulties when we learn that, in 1533, he could not send an ambassador to Lübeck because not a single man in his council knew German. On another occasion he was unable to write a letter in German to

Christian III because there was nobody at hand to whom he could dictate it. It was the lack of native talent which compelled Gustavus frequently to employ the services of foreign adventurers like Berent von Mehlen, John von Hoja, Konrad von Pyhy, and Georg Norman, not because they were the best, but because they were the only tools he could lay his hands upon. Under these circumstances a strong monarchy was indispensable to the development of liberty and independence in Sweden; and it was not the least anxious of Gustavus's many anxieties that he had constantly to be on the watch lest a formidable democratic rival should encroach on his prerogative. That rival was the Swedish peasantry as embodied in its most thoroughgoing representatives, the Dalesmen of central Sweden.

The position of the Swedish peasantry was absolutely unique. For the last hundred years they had been a leading factor in the political life of the country; and perhaps in no other contemporary European state could so self-reliant and self-respecting a class of yeomen have been found. Again and again, first under Engelbrekt and subsequently under the Stures, they had defended their own and the national liberties against foreign foes. But, if their services had been great, their pretensions were still greater. They were as obstinate and unruly in quiet times as they were brave and trustworthy in times of peril. They prided themselves on having "set King Gus in the high seat," but they were quite ready to unseat him if his rule were not to their liking; and there were many things with which the Dalesmen were by no means content. Naturally, after such a revolution, there were anomalies in Sweden which could not immediately be rectified, and should therefore have been borne with patience; but this the peasantry had not sense enough to see, and they freely blamed the king for not doing impossibilities. This state of things was responsible for the numerous peasant risings with which Gustavus had to contend.

The first of these rebellions occurred in the second year of his reign. On April 19, 1525, the Dalesmen met at Tuna to consider the causes of complaint they had against the king, and sent him a letter dated May 1, in which they frankly spoke their minds. They began, somewhat ungenerously, by reminding him of the time when he "wandered an outlaw in the woods," of how they had helped him to drive all his enemies out of the land, and placed him on the throne, "whereupon the king had made light of good Swedish men, and invited Germans and Danes into the land." And how had he kept his royal oath? After an unchristian sort he had taxed churches and monasteries, and taken away all the treasures which had been devoted to God's service. They had already "exhorted him with letters and humble reminders," at the same time begging him "to get them a better value for their wares; but the longer they waited the worse they came off." This they could put up with no longer. If the king would not listen to their complaints they would no longer keep the oath of allegiance they had sworn to him. "We perceive therefore," they concluded, "that you mean clean to destroy us poor Swedish men, which, with God's help, we will prevent; so take note hereof and act accordingly!"

Gustavus received this letter at Vesterås, whither he had summoned a national assembly in May, to receive his abdication if they were not satisfied with his rule. The prayers and promises of the Estates prevailed upon him to withdraw his abdication; and he sent a letter of remonstrance to the Dalesmen, declaring he could never believe that they seriously meant to withdraw their allegiance, and warning them not to provoke him too far. Gustavus would not use force against his own people if argument could prevail; besides, at that very time, he had need of every soldier he possessed, for the fortress of Kalmar, which he had entrusted to Berent von Mehlen, had rebelled against him, and it took him the whole summer to reduce it to obedience. Shortly after its surrender

the Dalesmen at last listened to reason ; and, when the king, in October, came to Tuna, they confessed they had been misled by scoundrels and begged his forgiveness.

Thus the first *Daluppror*, as it is called, ended peaceably enough. Much more serious was the second *Daluppror* which broke out two years later. In the interval Gustavus had been obliged to seize more Church property to satisfy his financial needs, and had, at the same time, unmistakeably favoured the "new teaching," which had already found its way into Sweden. The essentially Catholic peasantry were outraged by this policy ; and they attributed the almost total failure of the crops in 1526 to the wrath of Providence against the ungodly king. The Dalesmen, as usual, had their own particular grievances, although, since the pacification of 1525, Gustavus had carried his policy of conciliation so far as even to consult them on sundry affairs of State before deliberating with his Council.

Nevertheless, when in March, 1527, an impostor, calling himself Nils Sture, the eldest son of Sten Sture and Christina Gyllenstjerna, appeared in the Dales, two-thirds of the population were ready to lay down their lives for him. They styled him "Daljunkar" or the Squire of the Dales. Their credulity went so far as to credit his statement that "King Gustavus had rejected the Christian faith, and become a Lutheran and a heathen"; and, in the twelve articles of complaint which the Dalesmen forthwith despatched to the king, the introduction of "Luthery" and the spoliation of churches and monasteries occupied a prominent place. Gustavus replied that he knew nothing about "Luthery." He had only commanded that God's Word and Gospel were to be preached so that the clergy should no longer deceive the simple folk ; and said that it was only the priests and monks, "who did not wish their deceptions to be known," who had falsely spread the report that he wanted to introduce a new faith. "It amazes me," he continues, "that the good men of the Dales should trouble themselves about matters which they do not understand at all, and which do not

concern them"; and he invited them to send their deputies to Vesterås to take counsel with him and his Råd. This letter seems to have made some impression upon the Dalesmen; but their reply contained very little of the dutiful submission of subjects. They now categorically demanded that "no new faith or Luthery" should be introduced, that henceforth at court "there should not be so many foreign and outlandish customs with laced and brocaded clothes," and that the king "should burn alive, or otherwise do away with, all who ate flesh on Friday and Saturday." This was too much for even the patience of Gustavus. He was "not going to be lectured by them," he answered, "as to how he was to clothe his bodyguards and servants; he preferred to model himself upon other potentates, such as kings and emperors, so that they may see that we Swedes are no more swine and goats than they are."

The deputies from the Dales duly conferred with the king at Vesterås, in June, 1527; and the interview at least convinced them of the imposture of the Daljunkar, for by the king's command a letter was read aloud to them from Dame Christina, in which she utterly repudiated the Daljunkar. On their return home the Dalesmen confronted the Daljunkar with a copy of this letter, and asked for an explanation. The impostor had the effrontery to reply that "his mother would not acknowledge him because he was born before her marriage." "Then it was," says a contemporary chronicler, "that a mist fell from the eyes of such of the Dalesmen as still had some sense left, so that they understood that such a saying was an insult to so noble and virtuous a lady." The Daljunkar, perceiving that his cause was lost, fled to Norway. Yet the Dalesmen still remained stubborn and restless; and the king's officials reported that "they could scarce speak a couple of words to them without being threatened with a flogging." At last Gustavus was driven to give them a lesson: it was intolerable that a single class should dictate to the whole kingdom. So, after his long-delayed coronation had been celebrated, with the usual cere-

monies, at Upsala in January, 1528, he crossed the border of the Dales at the head of 14,000 men. Forty to fifty men from every parish had already been summoned to meet him, in a general assembly at Tuna, on February 26, to enquire into the cause of the recent disturbances. The ringleaders also had been persuaded to attend under a promise of a "free, sure and Christian safe-conduct to and from the Landsting." This promise was broken. When the people had assembled, the royal troops were marshalled around them, the guns were pointed at the throng, and the chief abettors and counsellors of the Daljunkar were singled out and executed on the spot. "When the others saw that blood began to flow they had quite another song to sing. Fearing for their lives, they fell a howling and crying, dumped down on their knees, begged and prayed the king for God's sake to spare them, and promised amendment. And, after a very long consultation, they were assured of his pardon and forgiveness, and did him homage. So this time King Gustavus brought the Dalesmen back to meekness and obedience."

But it was not for long. In less than three years the Dalesmen were again in arms against the king, this time to protect the bells of their churches. We have already seen on what onerous terms Gustavus purchased the assistance of Lübeck. Swedish trade had become a monopoly of the Hansa. Nor was this all. In order to pay off the money subsequently borrowed from the wealthy city the unhappy king was driven to the most desperate expedients. In the beginning of 1529 Lübeck still claimed 68,681 Lübeck marks, which were to be paid off in four years, besides a separate item of 8689 marks. The balance seemed to Gustavus unusually high, but he acknowledged his liability; and at the end of 1529 a fourth part of it was discharged. In 1530, however, nothing could be paid; and at the end of that year an ambassador from Lübeck appeared at Stockholm with remonstrances and menaces. The king immediately summoned a

council at Örebo, which determined that a resolution, passed the year before, for taking a bell from every church, chapel, and monastery in the town, should be extended to the country: every parish church was now to surrender a bell, and, if it had but one, it must be redeemed at half its value. Royal commissioners were sent to all the country districts to levy the tax; and, so successful was it, that Gustavus was able to pay off no less than 30,318 marks in 1531, and 10,983 more in 1532. But the imposition caused disturbances in some parts of the country; and again it was the Dales which openly resisted the royal ordinance. The inhabitants of Leksand, Ål, and Gagnef beat the royal commissioners, and refused to part with their bells; while the men of Tuna not only took theirs back again, but, at the beginning of March, 1531, sent Gustavus a letter which Gustavus himself declared to be little better than an act of rebellion. Moreover, when he invited them to attend a general assembly, which he had summoned to Upsala, they had the presumption, on April 12, 1531, to send out writs of their own for a rival Riksmöte to meet at Arboga. But the time had gone when the Dalesmen could summon parliaments. Gustavus ordered his governors to suppress the writ from the Dales; and the Upsala Assembly authorised him to collect all the outstanding bills. The Dalesmen thereupon offered to pay 2000 marks in lieu of their bells; and this compromise was gratefully accepted by the king.

But by far the most formidable of the popular risings, during the reign of Gustavus, was the one known as Dackefejden¹, which resulted in a regular civil war that shook the throne and was suppressed only with the utmost difficulty. Like the Bell-Rising, it was mainly due to the religious conservatism of the people. But it is remarkable that the Dalesmen, so far from taking part in Dacke's rebellion, sent 2000 men against him.

In the year 1539 Gustavus, who had now thoroughly com-

¹ Dacke's War.

nitted himself to the policy of spoiling the Church for the benefit of the State, sent his "visitors" through the provinces of Vestergötland, Vermland, Östergötland, and Småland, to carry out his ecclesiastical reforms¹, and, at the same time, appropriate all the superfluous church vessels and furniture. The "visitors," interpreting their powers most liberally, swept no less than 142,000 oz. of silver plate into the royal treasury during the years 1539-1541. One can imagine with what feelings the peasantry beheld the consecrated plate and other treasures plucked out of the churches, the jewels torn off the rich vestments and altar-cloths flung into waggons and carried off. On the top of these spoliations came fresh decrees forbidding the export of cattle under pain of death, and ordering a house-to-house visitation of the taxable yeomen (April 1541). This was more than the people would endure; and in the beginning of 1542 they rose in rebellion under a yeoman of Bleking, Nils Dacke by name, who, unable to pay a heavy fine in commutation of the death penalty for murdering a royal bailiff, had joined a band of border freebooters.

In May, 1542, Dacke invaded the south-east part of Småland, besieged the lord-lieutenant of Vestergötland in the fortress of Bergqvara, and on July 24 compelled him to surrender and return to his own province. A first attempt of Gustavus to attack Dacke from three different quarters only led to an armistice for three years—a sufficiently humiliating confession of failure on the king's part. By this armistice the Smålanders undertook, on condition of free forgiveness, to remain quiet and present their grievances to Gustavus in the regular way. What they complained of most were the heavy taxes, the plundering of the churches, the abolition of the old church customs, and the oppressive measures of the royal governors. As usual, Gustavus carefully considered the complaints of the Smålanders, and in a long circular letter, issued on December 30, 1542, endeavoured, very astutely, to make them see things from his

¹ See Chapter vi.

own point of view. But Dacke was not disposed to submit so easily. His pride had been puffed up by a letter he had received in November, 1542, from Albert, duke of Mecklenburg, who claimed the Swedish throne as the nephew, by marriage, of Christian II, offering to assist the Smålanders to drive Gustavus out of Sweden. Dacke left this offer open for the present, shrewdly preferring to make terms with the king if possible; but at the beginning of 1543 he broke the truce with Gustavus by ravaging the central provinces of Sweden. Again the royal armies were sent out against him; and, on the shores of Lake Åsunden, after an hour's hard fight, in the course of which Dacke was seriously wounded, his forces were scattered. Småland was then reduced to obedience; and Dacke himself was caught and shot in Rödeby Wood in August, 1543. The Dackefejden was the last rebellion with which Gustavus had to cope. Henceforth he was strong enough to maintain what he had established, and finish what he had begun.

Gustavus's foreign policy for the first twelve years of his reign aimed at little more than self-preservation. Only by the aid of Lübeck had he been able to secure the independence of Sweden; and Lübeck, in return, exploited Sweden, as Spain, at a later day, was to exploit her American colonies. Till the Lübeck yoke was shaken off, Sweden's natural development was hampered in every direction; and Gustavus's private correspondence shows how he chafed beneath it. By the time the greater part of the Lübeck debt was paid off, in 1531, the relations between the former allies were strained to breaking point; but the fear of the common foe, "unkind King Christian," prevented an actual rupture, although the Lübeckers, irritated by the granting of privileges to their rivals, the Dutch towns, openly complained that King Gustavus had "begun as an angel, but ended as a devil." But the moment of deliverance was at hand. The imprisonment of Christian II (August 9, 1532), the death of King Frederick I eight months later (April 9, 1533), and the simultaneous triumph of the aggressive democratic

Lutheran faction at Lübeck, now brought about a revolution in Scandinavian politics which was distinctly to the advantage of Sweden.

The new burgomaster of Lübeck, Jürgen Wullenwever, an ambitious and capable statesman, was inspired with the audacious idea of dominating Scandinavia. Circumstances apparently favoured him. Sweden seemed to be entirely dependent on Lübeck, while in Denmark something very like anarchy prevailed. The strife between the old and the new doctrine had there divided the nations into two hostile camps ; the throne was vacant ; and the union with Norway and the Duchies was of the loosest description. In June, 1533, a Herredag had assembled at Copenhagen to elect a new monarch. The choice lay between Frederick I's two sons, Duke Christian, who was devoted to Protestantism, and Duke Hans, a boy of twelve, whom the Catholic majority wished to set upon the throne. As however neither party could agree, the election was postponed till the following summer, so that the Norwegian Rigsraad might also be consulted. It was at this juncture that Wullenwever intervened. He was in favour of Duke Hans; but, when the young prince refused the crown, and the Danish Rigsraad formed a defensive alliance with Prince Christian (who had, in June, been elected duke of Holstein and Sleswick) and invited the Dutch towns to accede thereto, Wullenwever, relying on the strong sympathy of the lower orders in Denmark for the captive Christian II, negotiated with Christian's young kinsman, Count Christopher of Oldenburg. A treaty was now signed (May, 1534) between the count and Lübeck, nominally for the purpose of restoring Christian II, though, as a matter of fact, his name was to serve only as a rallying cry for his numerous Danish supporters, chief among whom were Ambrosius Bogbinder, ex-burgomaster of Copenhagen, and Jörgen Kock, burgomaster of Malmö. Four months before the conclusion of this alliance Gustavus Vasa had been compelled, by the insolence of Lübeck, to form a defensive

alliance with the provisional Danish government (February 2, 1534). In March, 1533, ambassadors from Lübeck had come to Stockholm to propose an alliance against the Dutch; but the proposal was rejected. In the course of the summer the Lübeckians laid an embargo on the property of Gustavus at Lübeck, to enforce payment of the remainder of the debt; and Gustavus retaliated by confiscating all the ships and wares of Lübeck in Sweden, imprisoning the Lübeck merchants, and abolishing all her commercial privileges. A few months later began the war known in northern history as *Grevens Fejde*, "The Count's War," the count in question being Christopher of Oldenburg.

It was on June 22, 1534, that Count Christopher was conveyed, by a Lübeck fleet, to Skovshoved in Sjælland. Copenhagen willingly opened her gates to him; Sjælland followed suit; Malmö had been on his side from the first. In six weeks the count was the master of eastern Denmark, which he ruled as governor in the name of Christian II. In Jutland, on the other hand, a Herredag assembled at Ry, elected Duke Christian king in July, 1534; and, although Christopher's troops, supported by the peasants, took Aalborg and defeated the Jutish nobility at Svenstrup (Oct. 1534), the armies of Christian, who had, as duke of Holstein, made peace with Lübeck in November, ably led by Johan Rantzau, succeeded, by the end of the year, in reconquering all Jutland. Count Christopher was powerless to help his friends on the other side of the Belt, as Gustavus Vasa was attacking him vigorously in Scania; and, even with the assistance of his ally, Duke Albert of Mecklenburg, Christopher was no match for the Swedish king. In January, 1535, Gustavus routed the two princes at Helsingborg; and all Scania, with the exception of Malmö, Landskrona, and Varberg, submitted to Denmark. In March, 1535, Duke Christian was proclaimed king of Denmark at Viborg as Christian III; the count of Hoja, Christopher's best general, was defeated and slain at Öxnebjerg in Fünen, by Rantzau, in

June, 1535: while the combined Danish-Swedish-Prussian navy, under Peter Skram, drove one great Lübeck fleet to seek protection beneath the guns of Copenhagen, and annihilated another in Svendborg Sound. Fünen having been subdued and severely punished, Christian III crossed over to Sjælland and began the siege of Copenhagen (July, 1535). But the end of the war was now at hand. Such a harvest of disasters had made the policy of the war party in Lübeck exceedingly unpopular; the old patrician council regained its sway; and Wullenwever was forced to resign. In the winter of 1535 negotiations were opened with Denmark, which led to the Peace of Hamburg (Feb. 1536), whereby Lübeck recognised Christian III as king, in return for the confirmation of her privileges. By this time only Varberg and Copenhagen still held out against Christian III. Both cities expected help from the Count Palatine Frederick, who had married Christian II's daughter Dorothea, and whose claims upon Denmark were supported by Charles V. But the war with Francis I, in 1536, prevented the Emperor from actively helping his nephew; and on July 29, 1536, after a heroic resistance of twelve months, Copenhagen surrendered. Thereafter the war smouldered out.

"Grevens Fejde" was much more than a mere contest for the Danish throne. In the first place it marks the end of the hegemony of Lübeck in Scandinavia. The skilful diplomacy of the wealthy city had contrived to save appearances by the Peace of Hamburg; but her supremacy was gone for ever. Scandinavians were now to rule in their own waters. In the second place "Grevens Fejde" meant the political eclipse of the lower and middle classes in Denmark, who, for the most part, had taken the part of Count Christopher; and finally, as we shall see presently (cap. v), it was the ruin of the Catholic Church in Denmark-Norway. To Sweden the war was an unmixed benefit. It led at once to an armistice with Lübeck, mediated by Christian III, and ultimately (Aug. 28, 1537) to a five years' truce, Lübeck consenting to abandon her ancient

privileges and renounce her claims for arrears of debt in return for the right to trade toll-free with the four ports of Stockholm, Kalmar, Söderköping, and Åbo. To such meagre proportions had her ancient monopolies in Sweden now shrunk. Thus the external coercion which for centuries had fettered the free development of Swedish trade was at last and for ever removed.

Another immediate consequence of "Grevens Fejde" was to strengthen the friendly relations between Sweden and Denmark, which culminated in an offensive and defensive alliance (Peace of Brömsebro, Sept. 15, 1541). A common fear of Charles V brought about this miracle; and the alliance thus formed was consolidated by two separate defensive alliances between France and the northern kingdoms. The Franco-Swedish treaty, the first link in a long chain of alliances between the two countries, was signed at Sceaux on July 11, 1542, each of the high contracting parties agreeing, on this occasion, to help the other, in case of need, with 25,000 men and 50 war-ships. Gustavus's apprehensions with regard to Charles V were set at rest by the Peace of Brussels, 1550, concluded by the ablest of his foreign servants, Georg Norman; and simultaneously his old ineradicable suspicions of Denmark revived. He expresses his real sentiments towards the sister state in a letter to Sten Lejonhufvud, governor of Kalmar, in the middle of 1545. "We advise and exhort you to the utmost of our ability," writes the king, "to put no hope or trust in the Danes, or their sweet scribbling, inasmuch as they mean nothing at all by it except how best they may deceive and betray us Swedes." Such instructions were not calculated to promote confidence between Swedish and Danish negotiators in the future.

Denmark, too, had her own grievances against Sweden; chief among which was the settlement of the Swedish Crown upon the descendants of Gustavus, the old dream of a Scandinavian union under a Danish king still haunting the court

of Copenhagen. A fresh cause of dispute was generated in 1548, when King Christian III's daughter was wedded to Duke Augustus of Saxony. On that occasion, apparently by way of protest against the decree of the Riksdag of Vesterås (Jan. 15, 1544) declaring the Swedish throne hereditary in Gustavus's family, the Danish king caused to be quartered on his daughter's shield not only the three Danish lions and the Norwegian lion with the axe of St Olaf, but also "the three crowns" of Sweden. Gustavus, naturally suspicious, was much perturbed by the innovation, and warned all his border officials to be watchful and prepare for the worst. In 1557 he even wrote to the Danish king protesting against the placing of the three crowns in the royal Danish seal beneath the arms of Denmark, and not, as heretofore, alongside them; and he bitterly reminded Christian that he owed his actual possession of the three lions and the axe of St Olaf to the assistance recently rendered to him by the three Crowns. Christian III replied that the three crowns signified not Sweden in especial, but the three Scandinavian kingdoms, and that their insertion in the Danish shield was only a reminiscence of the Union, an explanation which Gustavus petulantly characterised as "*en bloumeradt sken!*".¹" Nevertheless during the lives of Gustavus I and Christian III the relations between Denmark and Sweden continued to be pacific.

So much cannot be said of Gustavus's relations with his eastern neighbour Russia. Frontier disputes were here the cause of quarrel. Gustavus had avoided negotiation for fear lest the boundaries should be regulated on the basis of the ancient Peace of Nöteborg (1323), according to which Sweden should have relinquished a portion of her eastern frontier. This tergiversation on the part of the Swedes led to a war in Finland in 1556, limited to an ineffectual siege of Nöteborg by the Swedes, and an equally unsuccessful attack upon Viborg by the Russians. Gustavus's fear of Moscovy was very real,

¹ Lit. "a blooming fraud."

and contrasts oddly with the hearty contempt of the later Swedish kings for that power. He attributed to the Tsars the design of establishing a universal monarchy round the Baltic, similar to "the tyranny of the Turks in Asia and Africa"; and his letter to Ivan IV, conveyed by a private envoy, Canon Knut, of Åbo, who was sent on June 1, 1556, to Moscow to solicit peace, was almost abject in expression¹. The manner of the Grand Duke of Moscovy's reply was offensive enough; but he declared his willingness for peace, and desired that Swedish plenipotentiaries should forthwith be sent to Moscow. In March, 1557, a treaty was signed there, extending the truce to March 25, 1597, and stipulating that commissioners should meet on July 20, 1559, to regulate the frontier according to the provisions of the Treaty of Nöteborg.

In the last year of Gustavus's life an event occurred which was to have far-reaching consequences and profoundly affect the political development of Sweden. The ancient military Order of the Sword, founded in 1202 for the purpose of converting Livonia, and amalgamated, since 1237, with the more powerful Order of the Teutonic Knights, had, by the secularisation of the latter Order into the Dukedom of Prussia (1525), become suddenly isolated in the midst of hostile Slavonians. It needed but a jolt to bring down the crazy anachronism; and the jolt came in 1558 when the long-threatened war with Russia burst forth, and a flood of savage Moscovites poured over the land, capturing Narva and Dorpat, and threatening the whole province with destruction. In his despair, the last Master of the Order, Gotthard von Kettler, applied in 1559 to the nearest friendly, civilised potentate, Duke John of Finland, Gustavus's second son, for a loan on the security of two or three castles. At first Gustavus was disinclined to intervene, but the ambitious competition of Denmark and Poland forced his hand. The latter power had already (Sept. 15, 1559) signed a convention with Kettler and the archbishop of Riga, engaging to assist the

¹ Sipovsky: *Rodnaya Starina*, II. 168.

Order in return for a cession of territory; while Denmark, by a treaty signed on September 26 in the same year, undertook to protect the diocese of Ösel and Wick, in return for the right to nominate the bishop. The first bishop so nominated was King Frederick II's brother, Duke Magnus, who took possession of the island in April, 1560. Gustavus was not blind to the dangers which might accrue therefrom to Sweden, and in the spring of 1560 he also opened negotiations with Kettler in order to mediate a peace with Russia.

With the outlying European powers Sweden had still but little intercourse. During the Russian war, indeed, an embassy had been sent to England to persuade Queen Mary to break off the recently formed (1553) commercial relations with Russia by way of Archangel; but, as Sweden had nothing sufficiently lucrative to offer in return, the attempt failed. On the other hand, a commercial treaty was made with Anne, governor of East-Friesland, in 1556, and with France in 1559.

The incessant labour, the constant anxiety, which were the daily portion of Gustavus Vasa during the seven-and-thirty years of his reign, told at last upon even his splendid energy and magnificent constitution. In his later years we frequently hear him complain that he is no longer the man he was. "God knows," he writes in 1556, "that personally we have done our utmost; and rest and quiet are what we now long for, inasmuch as we are getting weary and weak in head, eyes, and elsewhere, so that we are no longer able to bear such heavy work as we, for the good of the commonalty of Sweden, have had and borne these many years." In the spring of 1560, sensible of an ominous decline of his powers, Gustavus summoned his last Riksdag. It was in the midst of the people he loved so well that the dying king desired to express his last wishes, and give an account of his stewardship. On June 16, 1560, the Assembly, in which every class of the community was duly represented, met at Stockholm. Ten days later, supported by his sons, Gustavus greeted the Estates in the

great hall of the palace. He began by thanking them for obeying his summons, and then took a retrospect of his reign, reminding them of the misery of the kingdom during the Union, and its deliverance from "that unkind tyrant, King Christian," whom God alone had punished and expelled. "For," continued he, "all of us, high and low, master and servant, young and old, ought never to forget His divine help and deliverance. What indeed was I that I could think of driving out so mighty a monarch, who was not only the ruler over three kingdoms, but the friend of the powerful Kaiser Karl, called the Fifth, and of the chief princes of Germany? But God did the work and made me His miracle-man, through whom His almighty power should be made manifest against King Christian, as also it hath been manifested, these forty years and more, both in temporal and spiritual things." And then he compared himself to another king, King David, whom God had taken from the sheepfolds to make him a ruler over His people. He knew very well, he concluded, that he was not perfect; and therefore he begged the Estates, as became faithful servants, to forgive him for all the faults and shortcomings of his government. Then the king, after exhorting them to be obedient to his sons, and live together in peace and harmony, commended them to God's protection and dismissed them with his blessing. Four days later the Riksdag passed a resolution confirming the hereditary right of Gustavus's eldest son, Prince Eric, to the throne. The old king's last anxieties were now over, and he could die in peace. On September 29, 1560, "after he had fought a good fight in patience and silence, he gave up the ghost between seven and eight of the clock in the forenoon."

Gustavus was thrice married. His first wife, Catherine of Saxe-Lauenburg, bore him, in 1533, his eldest son Eric. This union was neither long nor happy; but the blame of its infelicity is generally attributed to the lady, whose abnormal character was reflected and accentuated in her unhappy son. Much more fortunate was Gustavus's second marriage, a year after

the death of his first consort, with his own countrywoman, Margaret Lejonhufvud, who bore him five sons and five daughters, of whom three sons, John, Magnus, and Charles, and one daughter, Cecilia, survived their childhood. Queen Margaret died in 1551; and, a twelvemonth later, Gustavus wedded her niece, Catherine Stenbock, a handsome girl of sixteen, who survived him more than sixty years. To his second and third consorts Gustavus was invariably a devoted husband.

Gustavus's outward appearance in the prime of his life is thus described by a contemporary: "He was of the middle height, with a round head, light yellow hair, a fine long beard, sharp eyes, a small straight nose, well shaped lips, ruddy countenance, a reddish-brown body, elegant but somewhat large hands, pretty strong arms, a stout frame, small feet, and a body as fitly and well-proportioned as any painter could have painted it. He was of a sanguine-choleric temperament, and, when untroubled and un vexed, a bright and cheerful gentleman, easy to get on with; and, however many people happened to be in the same room with him, he was never at a loss for an answer to every one of them." Learned he was not, but he had a naturally bright and clear understanding, an unusually good memory, and a marvellous capacity for taking pains. He was also very devout, and his morals were irreproachable. On the other hand, Gustavus had his full share of the family failings of irritability and suspiciousness, the latter quality becoming almost morbid under the pressure of adverse circumstances. His energy, too, not infrequently degenerated into violence. But the Swedes, at any rate, should be very lenient towards the faults of the great monarch who devoted every moment of his manhood to their welfare. As Snoilsky has well said¹, partially quoting from Gustavus himself, he was God's miracle-man, who built up the realm of Sweden from base to roof, and gave his people a Protestant fatherland against their will.

¹ *Svensko Bilden*, 1.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HEGEMONY OF DENMARK, 1536-1588.

WHILE Gustavus Vasa was laying the foundations of the modern Swedish state, the Danish monarchy under Christian III and Frederick II had risen to the rank of a great power.

In the summer of 1536 the civil war which had devastated Denmark for the last two years was terminated by the convention of July 29, 1536, between Christian III and the gallant defenders of Copenhagen; and on August 6 the victorious king held his entry into the capital of his realm. "Grevens Fejde," now happily over, marked a turning-point in Danish history. The king and the nobility had triumphed over the burgesses and the common people; the new Church and the new Faith had prevailed over the old Church and its aristocratic patrons; and finally the monarchy had won the day at the expense of the Rigsraad, or Senate. It was clear to everyone that such a victory inevitably involved the fall of Romanism and the aggrandisement of the monarchy: the only question was whether this political transformation should be effected by legal or revolutionary means. Originally both the king had desired, and the people had expected, a compromise. A few days after the taking of Copenhagen, a Rigsdag was summoned to Copenhagen for October 15. On the same day "his Majesty's preachers and servants of the Word in Sjælland, Scania, and Jutland," presented to the king a petition in which they desired the appointment of superintendents in every diocese, with a sort of upper-superintendent who was to have

authority over the affairs of religion in general, and together with other learned men draw up regulations for Church ceremonies and discipline. But the strong pressure exercised upon the king by his German counsellors and the leaders of the army prevented anything like the gradual, moderate, and orderly reformation which was at first anticipated. The large army, assembled in and around Copenhagen, was clamouring for its arrears of pay; and there was no money in hand wherewith to meet the demand. The king was already heavily in debt to his Holsteiners; and the onerous taxes which had been imposed on the Danes in June and July had fallen far short of the royal requirements. Moreover it soon became evident that the bishops and senators assembled at Copenhagen either could not or would not assist the king with ready money.

In these circumstances the idea of making Christian master of the situation by a *coup d'état* rapidly gained ground. Once let the temporal power of the bishops be abolished—it was argued—and their immense estates seized, and the king would have ample means wherewith to satisfy all the claims upon him. Gustavus Vasa had already set the example in the sister kingdom; and Christian III, with a victorious army behind him, was in an infinitely stronger position than Gustavus Vasa had ever been in. With the utmost secrecy the preparations for the projected *coup d'état* were carried out. On the afternoon of August 11 the chiefs of the army assembled at the castle. Some of the most thoroughgoing captains proposed to imprison all the senators in town, and all the bishops in the country; but the king prudently refused to risk the incalculable consequences of such an extreme act of violence; and finally a compromise was arrived at. Archbishop Torben Bille, Bishop Joakim Rönnov, of Roskilde, and Olof Munk, coadjutor of Ribe, were to be arrested that same night; while the temporal senators were to be compelled to consent to the deposition of the bishops and the confiscation of

their goods by the Crown. The plan was quickly and energetically executed. The same night Bishops Bille and Munk were arrested; and Rönnov, who had hidden himself in a loft, was secured next day. The gates of the city were then closed; troops were concentrated round the castle; and the temporal senators, together with the venerated Ove Bille, bishop of Aarhus, were forced to appear at the castle at 8 o'clock next morning, and there compelled to sign a letter of surrender, which declared that, inasmuch as the realm of Denmark could not be ruled save by a sovereign and a temporal regimen, therefore the government should be in the hands of the king and the temporal Senate; and no bishop was henceforth to have any jurisdiction in any diocese of the realm without the sanction of an oecumenical Council, and the consent of the king, the Senate, the nobility, and the people. The Senate pledged itself, moreover, not to hinder the lawful preaching and promulgating of the holy Gospel and God's pure Word; and agents were despatched all over the kingdom to seize the remaining bishops and take possession of the episcopal castles. Obviously a man of action, a soldier, must have been the author of this swift and audacious act of authority; and Danish historians generally attribute it to the Holsteiner, Johan Rantzau, Christian III's chief general. Rantzau himself superintended the execution of the royal mandate in Jutland, before proceeding to Gottorp, from whence, as stadtholder, he was to administer the Duchies and guard the southern frontier. Whatever we may think of the morality of this *coup d'état*, it was, at any rate, a financial success; for in the month of September the king was able to pay off the greater part of the army.

In the middle of October the Rigsdag assembled at Copenhagen. It was the largest assembly which had ever been seen in Denmark, consisting of no fewer than 1,200 representatives of the nobility, burgesses, and peasantry. On the other hand, the Rigsraad had sadly shrunk. Before "Grevens Fejde" that

august body had numbered fifty members; now it was reduced to nineteen, the clergy, since the imprisonment of the prelates, being naturally unrepresented. Nevertheless, weakened and depleted though it was, the Rigsraad was still strong enough to maintain its political superiority, as is evident from the character of the royal *Haandfestning*, or charter of October 30. That this document should bear the impress of the victorious party's interpretation of the new constitution was only natural. Thus, in contrast to the charters of the last three kings, the charter of 1536 emphasises the hereditary right of the reigning family to the throne. The realm of Denmark is indeed to remain a free elective monarchy; but, at the same time, the king's lieges are bound over, on the king's demise, to hold all their castles for his eldest son, or, in case of his dying before his father, for the king's second son or his guardians. If there were no sons, the king and the Rigsraad were jointly to elect a successor to the throne. Thus the Crown was now made hereditary, and the danger of an interregnum obviated. The royal authority was still further strengthened by the omission of those clauses in King Frederick I's charter which released subjects from their allegiance to the king in case he refused to listen to remonstrances from the Rigsraad against breaches of the charter, and empowered the Rigsraad, with the king's sanction, to amend the charter. On the other hand, we find in the charter of 1536 no limitation of the political power and influence of the Rigsraad and the nobility. Evidently the document was meant to be a compromise between the two highest authorities in the State, and, at the same time, a guarantee of the inviolability of both. The king was to rule the land conjointly with the Rigsraad and nobility; the members of the Rigsraad were to have the exclusive right to the fiefs of the Crown; no foreigner was to be admitted into the Raad, or receive grants of land from the Crown without the Raad's consent.

On the same day the Rigsdag adopted a recess, which,

after having been recited in public in the Gammel Torv, or old market-place, was signed and sealed by the king, the Raad, and representatives of the peasantry. This remarkable document vividly reflects the emotions of the times. It is no dry and formal piece of legal phraseology, but a passionate exposition of all the calamities which had afflicted the land during the recent civil war, and, at the same time, a suggestion of the means whereby peace and reconciliation might be restored. First, all the signatories to this document, the king, the Raad, the nobility, and the commonalty, solemnly engage for ever to renounce all envy, hatred, suspicion, and mistrust, and unite to defend the fatherland against the Emperor, King Christian II, and their adherents. The king, moreover, promises to dispense equal justice to all according to law and equity; and the people, in their turn, promise complete loyalty and obedience to the king. Then comes the real kernel of the recess, which was nothing more or less than the abolition of Catholicism, and the establishment of a national Protestant Church¹. The recess also contained sundry administrative provisions, and acknowledged Christian III's infant son, Prince Frederick, heir to the throne.

King Christian's charter contained the following significant paragraph concerning Norway: "Inasmuch as the realm of Norway is so reduced both in power and wealth, and the inhabitants thereof are not able by themselves to maintain a sovereign and king, and the said realm is nevertheless for all time united to the Crown of Denmark, and the greatest part of the Raad of the realm of Norway, especially Archbishop Olaf, who is now the chief leader in that kingdom, hath twice within a short time fallen away from the kingdom of Denmark...now therefore we have promised the Rigsraad of Denmark that, if Almighty God should so dispose that the said realm of Norway shall return again to our dominion...then it shall hereafter be and become subject to the Crown

¹ For details see Chapter VI.

of Denmark like as are our other lands, to wit, Jutland, Fünen, Sjælland or Scania, and hereafter shall not be or be called a kingdom apart, but a dependency of the Danish realm and Crown for all time." This political annihilation was to be the punishment of the ancient kingdom of Norway for supporting, as it had every right to do, the cause of Christian II. It was not the king, but the Danish Rigsraad, which insisted on the insertion of this merciless clause in the new charter. Nevertheless this provision remained a dead letter. Norway never became "a dependency of the realm of Denmark." Its nobility did not sit in the Danish Rigsraad; its estates were not represented in the Danish Rigsdag; it retained its own laws and its own judicial administration; homage was done to the Danish kings at Oslo as heretofore; and, in all state documents, Norway was referred to as a kingdom apart. For the royal house would not surrender its hereditary right to Norway; and King Christian received the Norwegian crown not by election but as his lawful inheritance. On the other hand, Norway from henceforth became a milch-cow for the Danish nobility, who appropriated the most lucrative fiefs and monopolised the civil and ecclesiastical administration during the first century after the Reformation. The subjection of Norway was, however, not completed without a brief struggle. The archbishop of Oslo had attempted to introduce Christian II's son-in-law, the Count Palatine Frederick, into Norway; and it was therefore necessary, in September 1536, to despatch a small fleet and two hundred men to reinforce Eske Bille, the Danish commandant of the fortress of Bergenhus, till a larger and better armed fleet could be sent in the following spring. By the time it arrived all active opposition was already over. The archbishop had fled to the Netherlands with most of his adherents; and after a few weeks' siege his commandant surrendered the fortress of Stenvigsholm. All the Norwegian bishops thereupon did homage to Christian III, and resigned their benefices. Hans Reff, bishop of Oslo, went still further.

After a visit to Copenhagen he returned to Norway as the first evangelical superintendent of the dioceses of Oslo and Hamar. He was, however, the only renegade among the Danish-Norwegian Catholic prelates.

The danger which, in the summer of 1536, had threatened King Christian III from the Count Palatine and his cousin, Kaiser Charles V, was thus happily averted; and subsequent complications were provisionally obviated by a three years' truce concluded at Brussels, which nevertheless left open the claims of Christian II's family to the crowns of Denmark and Norway. Peace was also concluded with the cities of Rostock and Wismar, which had supported rebellious Copenhagen; and Christian III and his counsellors were now, at last, in a position to heal the ravages caused by the late war.

Although there is no extant record of the general condition of Denmark immediately after the civil war, indications are not wanting that the whole social fabric was out of joint and in a state bordering upon dissolution. For more than two years the land had been ravaged and plundered; with the exception of the East-Danish provinces across the Sound, where the peasantry had stayed at home, and only the chief fortresses had been the objects of attack, there was scarcely a place in the kingdom on which the war had not set its mark. More than sixty manor-houses had been burnt to the ground; every castle and fortress had been besieged; all the towns had been sucked dry by the unpaid soldiery quartered upon them; and this latter plague was to continue during the greater part of King Christian's reign. The *Halslösning* (or commutation of the death penalty), rigidly extorted from the peasantry of the forty-nine rebellious counties of Jutland and many other provinces, as the price of their lives, had crushed the flower of the Danish yeomanry to the ground. Last but not least, the heavy taxes imposed during the war for maintaining the mercenaries had well-nigh ruined the towns. Everywhere there was unspeakable misery, still further aggravated by

the prevailing lawlessness, another consequence of the war. Crimes of violence were of everyday occurrence ; there were not labourers enough to till the soil ; many landed proprietors had naught but the bare land left. In addition to these calamities, the civil war had produced a deep-rooted mutual hatred and jealousy between the various classes of society, which no number of charters or recesses could remove in a moment. A strong hand, an impartial and conciliatory temper, were needed to soften these animosities ; and it is the imperishable merit of King Christian III that he was equal to the task. He was no party king. Raised high above all classes, he was ready to render equal justice to all.

Twelve months after the imprisonment of the bishops, Christian and his consort, the beautiful Dorothea of Saxe Lauenburg, were crowned at Vor Frue Church at Copenhagen, August 12, 1537. The coronation and anointing were performed by Johann Bugenhagen, who had arrived in Denmark shortly before to set the affairs of the Church in order. Simultaneously a Herredag, or Assembly of Notables, was summoned to the capital, to take in hand the needed work of legislation ; and the result of its laudably prompt deliberation was a recess in twenty-eight chapters, which was to be the starting-point of a long series of statutes culminating in the great recess of 1558. One consequence of the ecclesiastical reforms, referred to below (cap. vi), was the foundation of the university of Copenhagen. Since 1531 Denmark had had no university. The few who felt the need of higher education went to Wittenberg, Basel, or Paris. But the triumph of the Reformation necessarily called for the establishment of a native high-school where the men of the new Faith might be trained for their high calling. There was abundance of native talent ready to hand ; but the motive power in this, as in every other project of reform, was undoubtedly Johann Bugenhagen, whose vigorous initiative, enthusiasm, and energy quickly overcame all difficulties. On September 9, 1537, in Vor Frue

Church, in the presence of the Rigsraad and the magistracy of Copenhagen, Christian III declared the university to be reestablished.

The circumstances under which Christian III ascended the Danish throne naturally exposed Denmark to the danger of foreign domination. It was the nobility and estates of the Duchies which had placed at Christian's disposal almost unlimited means for the conquest of the land; it was German and Holstein noblemen, and especially those of the Rantzau family, who had led his armies and directed his diplomacy. No wonder that the young king felt bound to reward the men who had stood at his side in the hour of danger. It was equally natural that a mutual confidence between a king who had conquered his kingdom, and a people who had stood in arms against him, could not be attained in an instant; and consequently we find that the first six years of Christian III's reign saw a contest between opposing forces, represented respectively by the Danish Rigsraad and the German counsellors, both of whom sought to rule "the pious king" exclusively.

So early as the Rigsdag of 1536, however, the Danish party won a signal victory by obtaining the insertion in the charter of the provisions stipulating that only native-born Danes should fill the three great offices of high steward, chancellor, and lord high constable, and that no foreigner should have a place in the Rigsraad, or receive fiefs or castles without the consent of the Raad. Yet, during the earlier years of his reign, the king's German councillors continued paramount. Chief among them were the Saxon, Wolfgang von Uttenhof, and the king's brother-in-law, Duke Albert of Prussia, who had been his mainstay during the critical time of "Grevens Fejde." Their policy was to confirm and increase the royal authority, both in the kingdom and the Duchies, by the formation of a purely royalist party independent alike of the Rigsraad and the Holsteiners. Other favourite councillors were Johan and Melchior Rantzau. They aimed at the in-

dependence of Sleswick-Holstein and its simply personal union with the monarchy. This strong German and Holstein influence was, however, more than counterpoised, in the long run, by the Rigsraad, whose most notable members were the chancellor, Johan Friis, a patriotic, highly gifted, prudent and moderate statesman; the able diplomatist, Eske Bille, whose devotion to Catholicism and the fallen bishops impaired neither his loyalty nor his usefulness, and the lord high constable, Erik Banner, a warm friend of the Reformation.

The ultimate triumph of the Danish party dates from 1539. Previously to this the king had given great offence to the patriotic by placing foreigners in positions of trust and importance, contrary to the law of the land; but when, in the beginning of 1539, the disputes between Gustavus Vasa and Christian III threatened to pass into actual hostilities, and Denmark's relations with the Emperor and the Count Palatine Frederick, Christian II's son-in-law, grew equally unsatisfactory, the king saw the necessity of removing the last trace of discontent in the land, not only by appointing Danish magnates, hitherto set aside, to the highest military positions in the kingdom, but also by readmitting into the Raad men long proscribed, like Anders Bille, Jakob Hardenberg, and Erik Bolle. The death of Melchior Rantzau in 1539, and of Wolfgang von Utanhof in 1542, still further benefited the Danish party. The banished partisans of Christian II were now also allowed to return to Denmark; and one of them, the Norwegian admiral Kristoffer Trondsen, was to render his new sovereign notable service. The complete identification of the Danish king with the Danish people was accomplished at the Herredag of Copenhagen, 1542, when the nobility and gentry of Denmark voted Christian a twentieth part of all their property to pay off his heavy debt to the Holsteiners and Germans.

It was in the most difficult circumstances that Christian III had fought his way to the full possession of the kingdom of Denmark; and, when at last he had reached his goal, fresh

difficulties sprang up in his path. His right to the realm was openly disputed by the children of Christian II, supported by the Emperor and the regent of the Netherlands; in North Germany those princes who had interfered in the affairs of Scandinavia were his bitterest enemies; he had secret opponents in Lübeck and the other Hanse towns; and in Sweden reigned a king who regarded every political combination of Denmark with suspicion. Yet, despite every obstacle, Christian III and his counsellors succeeded in carrying out a wise and reasonable policy, which aimed exclusively at the preservation of peace, the security of the dynasty, and the freedom of the Evangelical Church.

The great political antithesis, which in the first half of the sixteenth century divided Europe into two hostile camps, exercised a decisive influence upon Denmark's foreign policy during the earlier years of Christian III's reign. For the first time in her history, Denmark was forced actively to participate in European politics in consequence of the determination of Charles V to support the hereditary claims of his nieces to the Scandinavian kingdoms. This hostile policy naturally drew Christian III towards France and the German Protestant princes, and compelled him to preserve friendly relations with Gustavus of Sweden. The three years' truce with the Emperor and the Netherlands gave Denmark a welcome respite; but neither of the parties to it regarded it as anything but a truce. The surrender of Copenhagen had caused Charles V to postpone his plan of placing the Count Palatine Frederick and Dorothea, the daughter of Christian II, on the Danish throne by force of arms; but he had never abandoned it, and he steadily refused to allow Christian III any title but that of Duke of Holstein.

A compact with the German Evangelical princes was therefore the pivot of King Christian's policy. It was cemented by the Union of Brunswick, April 9, 1538, whereby it was stipulated that, if any one of the parties to the Union were

attacked by a power having the obvious intention of re-introducing Catholicism into its territories, the other parties should hasten to the assistance of the state so attacked with 3000 infantry or 1000 cavalry, or provide £40,000 in lieu thereof. The Union was to last for nine years; and the German princes expressly promised assistance to the Danish king in case of attack. Negotiations were also opened with Francis I; but nothing came of them. Meanwhile the three years' truce was drawing to an end; and negotiations for its prolongation were begun. But the political situation was now less favourable to Denmark. The Emperor's superior policy had succeeded in dividing the Schmalkaldic League. By the Convention of Frankfort, in March 1537, Charles had made some concessions to the Protestants, and had, at the same time, won over Landgrave Philip of Hesse. This was so far injurious to Christian III as it improved the prospects of the Count Elector Frederick and his wife Dorothea. In the spring of 1541 a Danish embassy, headed by Chancellor Utenhof, attended the Reichstag at Regensburg; but the utmost that King Christian could obtain was a prolongation of the truce with the Netherlands till November 1, 1541. This meagre result induced Christian III to conclude the Peace of Brömsebro with Gustavus Vasa (p. 54), and the Treaty of Fontainebleau (Nov. 29, 1541) with Francis I. Each of the high contracting parties to the latter treaty bound himself to help the other in time of war. Denmark further engaged, in case of necessity, to close the Sound and place 1000 men and six vessels at the disposal of France within three months, France promising 2000 men and twelve ships within four months.

King Christian now felt so secure that, in November, 1541, he could reject an offer on the part of the Emperor for the prolongation of the truce. In 1542 war was actually declared. A Danish contingent joined the Franco-Cleves army which invaded Brabant in July; the Sound was closed against Dutch vessels; and a fleet of twenty-six sail cruised in the North Sea.

After a fruitless attempt on the part of Hamburg to mediate between the belligerents, a Danish fleet of forty ships, with 10,000 men on board, set sail for the Netherlands to break the dykes and capture the Isle of Walcheren, but was scattered by a tempest and did nothing. On the other hand, the skilful dispositions of Johan Rantzau on the Holstein frontier prevented an invasion from Germany. But the greatest effect was produced by the closing of the Sound. This was, after all, the most effective weapon in King Christian's hand, for it excluded the Dutch towns from the Baltic, and thereby threatened them with ruin. On the other hand, all Christian's allies proved faithless or useless. The Protestant princes, in direct contravention of the Union of Brunswick, refused him assistance under the pretext that the war was not a religious war, and had been provoked by the king himself. Gustavus Vasa had need of all his forces to crush Dacke's rebellion (p. 49). Francis I, instead of sending the stipulated 100,000 gulden to pay the soldiers of Christian, mendaciously accused him of not fulfilling his obligations, and, when pressed, became abusive. The patent faithlessness of the French king strengthened the peace party in Denmark; and, as the Netherlands were equally desirous of peace, the Emperor invited Denmark to offer terms at the Reichstag to be held at Speier in February, 1544. Thither accordingly a Danish embassy was sent. Its great object was to obtain a definitive peace with the Emperor, based on his abandonment of the claims of the children of Christian II. It succeeded completely. By the treaty of May 23, 1544, it was agreed that Christian III should renounce the French alliance, and open the Sound. Both parties undertook not to assist each other's enemies. In a secret article, moreover, the Emperor promised never to begin another war for the sake of the Count Palatine and his wife. The conditions of peace must be regarded as a diplomatic victory for Denmark.

The Peace of Speier could not but increase the credit of the monarchy at home; but the still greater advantage of

financial stability accrued to it from the enormous increase of the royal revenue consequent upon the confiscation of the property of the Catholic Church. The recess of 1536 had decreed that all the property of the bishops should pass to the Crown for the support of the monarchy and the common weal. The total value of the bishops' property cannot be exactly determined. Only as regards the see of Odense do we know that, shortly before its confiscation, it had an annual income of 16,000 bushels of corn. But the property of the bishops was far less considerable than the property of the religious houses. Short work had been made of these even before 1536. All the monasteries of the Mendicant Friars had been seized by the towns; and of the fifty-four abbeys twenty-two were now governed by temporal superiors. The recess had determined that these, together with the cathedral chapters, should remain as they were "till the king and the Rigsraad, with the help of various wise and learned men, had otherwise disposed concerning them." Nevertheless their secularisation had continued rapidly without any special authority. By 1540 thirty-seven monasteries had already been granted away; and on the death of Christian III only ten still stood under clerical supervision.

The confiscation of monastic property benefited the Crown in two ways. The old Church had indeed frequently rendered the State considerable financial aid; but such voluntary assistance was, from the nature of the case, casual and arbitrary. Now, however, the State derived a fixed and certain revenue from the confiscated lands; and the possession of immense landed property at the same time enabled the Crown advantageously to conduct the administration. The gross revenue of the State is estimated to have risen threefold. Before the Reformation the revenue from land amounted to 400,000 bushels of corn; after the confiscations of Church property it rose to 1,200,000 bushels. And here we come to the strong point of Christian III's government. It was epoch-making in

the matter of administration. Order, method, consistency, and economy are discernible in every direction. A capable official class was also formed; and it proved its efficiency under the strictest supervision. Particular attention was paid to the navy. Ship-building was prosecuted with great energy during the first ten years of the king's reign. In 1550 the royal fleet numbered at least thirty vessels, and was largely employed as a maritime police in the Baltic and North Seas, where piracy still prevailed largely.

The most important domestic event during the latter part of the reign of Christian III was the partition of the Duchies between the king and his brothers, Duke Hans and Duke Adolphus, both of whom had been educated at the Prussian and Hessian courts. On the outbreak of the war with the Emperor in 1543, however, they had been summoned home to participate in the administration of Sleswick-Holstein. Subsequently, at the Landtag of Reusberg, 1544, Christian consented to divide the Duchies with them. The territory of the three princes lay scattered partly in North Sleswick, partly in Holstein, and were henceforth called the Gottorp, Sønderborg, and Haderslev divisions after their respective fortresses. As regards foreign affairs the dukes undertook to act in common with Denmark.

The foreign policy of Christian III's latter days was regulated by the Peace of Speier. He carefully avoided all foreign complications, for fear of financial embarrassment, and cultivated the amity of the Emperor. He steadily refused to assist the Protestant princes in the Schmalkaldic War of 1546, ostensibly because it was a purely political affair, really because he still resented their shameful desertion of him during his own recent war with the Emperor. Of great importance to the royal Danish house was the marriage of Christian's daughter, Anna, in 1548, to Duke Augustus of Saxony, the brother of the famous Elector Maurice. It also marked a change of policy. Christian's refusal to participate in the

Schmalkaldic War had produced a coolness between him and his brother-in-law, the duke of Prussia; henceforth Saxon influence was to predominate at Copenhagen. When the dignity of Elector, after the fall of Maurice at the battle of Sievershausen, 1553, fell to Duke Augustus, King Christian and the margrave of Brandenburg intervened as mediators in the contest between the Emperor and Saxony; and a Danish embassy, headed by Peter Okse, contributed essentially to the conclusion of peace. After 1554 German politics became more tranquil; and now it was that the Danish king began to reap the fruits of his wise and cautious policy. Everywhere he was respected and deferred to. In 1556 the Lower Saxon Circle would even have elected him their chief leader; but Christian declined the honour on the grounds of age and infirmity. He also continued on the best of terms with the new Emperor, Ferdinand I.

Both in his private and public life, Christian III found an energetic coadjutor in his ambitious and high-spirited consort, Dorothea. Like her husband she had warmly adopted the cause of the Reformation; her influence over the king was considerable; and it was mainly due to her that the royal house of Denmark now assumed an unprecedented magnificence and exclusiveness. She was also not without political capacity; but her haughty, overbearing disposition was resented not merely by the leading Danish statesmen, but also by her own son, Prince Frederick, the heir to the throne.

On New Year's Day, 1559, King Christian III expired. His calm and peaceful death was symbolical of his whole life. Though not perhaps a great, he was, in the fullest sense of the word, a good ruler. A strong sense of duty, a deep but unpretentious piety, and a cautious but by no means pusillanimous common-sense, had marked every action of his patient, laborious, and eventful life. But the work he left behind him is the best proof of his statesmanship. He found Denmark in ruins; he left her stronger and wealthier than she had ever been before.

The new king, Frederick II, was born at Haderslevhus on July 1, 1534. His mother, Dorothea of Saxe-Lauenburg, was the elder sister of Catherine, the first wife of Gustavus Vasa, and the mother of Eric XIV. The two little cousins, born the same year, were destined, always and everywhere, to be lifelong rivals: as young men they were to woo the same women; as young monarchs they were to begin the first of the ten fratricidal wars between two nations whom blood, religion, language, and common interests ought to have closely united.

When Christian III had conquered Denmark, Prince Frederick, at the age of two, was proclaimed successor to the throne at the Rigsdag of Copenhagen (Oct. 30, 1536); and homage was done to him at Oslo, for Norway, in 1548. The choice of his governor, the patriotic historiographer, Hans Svaning, was so far fortunate as it ensured the devotion of the future king of Denmark to everything Danish; but Svaning, if a good patriot, was a poor pedagogue, and the wild and wayward lad suffered all his life from the defects of his early training. In his eighteenth year the prince was committed to the care of a Hofmeister, Ejlev Hardenberg, at the fortress-castle of Malmöhus; and here he fell in love with the niece of his Hofmeister, Anna Hardenberg, an event not without influence on his future career. In April, 1558, he saw his father for the last time at Koldinghus. Immediately afterwards Christian III fell seriously ill; but, although well aware of the gravity of the king's condition, and repeatedly summoned to the sick man's bedside by his mother, Frederick delayed his departure from Malmöhus so long that he was little more than half way towards Copenhagen when the end came. In the funeral oration spoken over Frederick himself, thirty years later, his dilatoriness on this occasion was attributed to contrary winds; it was much more probably due to his deep resentment at the efforts of his parents to remove out of his reach, before he ascended the throne, the lady to whom he had already solemnly pledged his troth. This,

indeed, they failed to do; and his devotion to Anna Hardenberg was no doubt the cause of the failure of the numerous matrimonial negotiations made on his behalf during the first twelve years of his reign. After the hands of Elizabeth of England, Mary of Scotland, and Renata of Lorraine, granddaughter of Christian II, had successively been sought for him in vain, the royal family and the Rigsraad grew anxious about the succession. In November, 1571, Frederick received a visit, no doubt prearranged, from his aunt Elizabeth, duchess of Mecklenburg, who brought with her her daughter Sophia, a girl of fourteen; and to her the king was married on July 20, 1572. This union, despite the fact that the groom was three-and-twenty years older than the bride, was extremely felicitous. Frederick is one of the few kings of the house of Oldenburg who had no illicit *liaison*. From first to last he was absolutely loyal to his young wife, who bore him four daughters and three sons, of whom the eldest boy, Christian, succeeded him.

The reign of Frederick II falls into two well-defined divisions, (1) a period of war, 1559–1570, and (2) a period of peace, 1570–1588. The period of war began with the Ditmarsch expedition.

Ditmarsch is that district of western Holstein which lies between the Elbe and the Eider, and is bounded on the west by the North Sea. From the first half of the tenth century it had belonged to the counts of Stade, but passed under the suzerainty of the archbishops of Bremen, forming a sort of independent peasant-republic, ruled originally by an assembly of yeomen, but from 1447 by a popularly elected council of forty-eight members. The counts of Holstein made frequent fruitless attempts to conquer the valiant yeomen; and, even when the district was incorporated with the duchy of Holstein, and made a Danish fief by the Emperor Frederick III, the Ditmarschers still maintained their independence. Their most memorable exploit was in 1500, when a thousand Ditmarschers, under Wolf Isebrandt, annihilated, near Hemming-

stedt, a large combined Danish-Holstein army, on which occasion the Dannebrog, or Danish standard, was captured, and King Hans barely escaped with his life. The Reformation occasioned dissensions among the Ditmarschers; and danger from without became urgent when Duke Adolphus of Holstein, Christian III's brother, took it upon himself to subdue the defiant yeomen who would submit to no over-lord. Vainly had Adolphus urged his royal brother to take part in the expedition, and on the death of the king in 1559 he resolved to undertake it alone. But the Danish stadholder in the Duchies, Henrik Rantzau, warned Frederick II of the plan, and moved the Danish king, together with his brother, Duke Hans, to cooperate. With an army of 20,000, under the veteran Johan Rantzau, the two princes marched into Ditmarschland, which, after a valiant resistance, worthy of the heroic traditions of the people, was compelled to surrender. The princes then divided the land between them; but the inhabitants were permitted to retain their ancient laws, privileges, and semi-independent form of government.

Equally triumphant was Frederick in his war with Sweden, though here the contest was much more severe. The tension which had prevailed between the two kingdoms during the last years of Gustavus Vasa had perpetually threatened a rupture; but it was not till the accession of Gustavus's eldest son, Eric XIV, that the struggle, known in northern history as the Scandinavian Seven Years' War, actually burst forth. There were many causes of quarrel between the two ambitious young monarchs. The Danish king persisted in retaining the three crowns in his escutcheon; and Eric retaliated by quartering the arms of both Denmark and Norway in his own. Sweden's policy of conquest in Estonia, which had formerly been under Danish rule, also excited bitterness and envy in Denmark. Repeated efforts to adjust differences foundered upon mutual distrust; and in the beginning of 1563 an event took place which precipitated hostilities.

In accordance with his communication to the Riksdag of Arboga (cap. vi), in April, 1561, Eric, shortly after his coronation, had undertaken his long-meditated journey to England as the suitor of Queen Elizabeth ; but contrary winds drove him back to his own kingdom, and the journey was postponed till the following year. June, 1562, saw him still in Sweden ; and by that time Eric had begun to doubt the possibility of winning Elizabeth's hand. His fancy now turned more and more in the direction of Mary of Scotland. Accordingly he sent an embassy to Scotland to prepare the way, without, however, renouncing absolutely the English match ; and simultaneously he opened matrimonial negotiations with a third lady, Christina of Hesse, of whom he soon received such good reports that he despatched a splendid embassy to Hesse to conclude the contract. This embassy, on reaching Copenhagen, was detained by King Frederick, who wished, for political reasons, to prevent the Hessian marriage. Despite Eric's protests, the embassy was still further detained ; and this openly hostile act was speedily followed by another. Two Danish squadrons were sent into the German Ocean and the Baltic Sea respectively, to seize any vessel carrying muniments of war to or from Sweden. Eric promptly retaliated by despatching a fleet of nineteen sail, under Jakob Bagge, into the Baltic, ostensibly to convey an embassy to Rostock, there to meet the Hessian princess, but really "to see what the Danish fleet would do if it were met upon the open sea." The two fleets encountered each other on Whit Monday, May 30, off Bornholm ; and the Swedes captured the Danish admiral with his flag-ship and two other vessels.

A peace congress, which assembled at Rostock, was rendered abortive by Denmark's formal declaration of war. Lübeck, moreover, already bound to Denmark by a defensive alliance dated June 13, 1563, alarmed by the progress of the Swedes in Livonia, and irritated by Eric's refusal to allow the Hanse League to trade with Narva, to the detriment of his

recently acquired port of Reval, also declared war against Eric; and on October 5 Poland acceded to the anti-Swedish league. Sweden was left to her own resources; but these, thanks to the care of Gustavus Vasa, were by no means inconsiderable. Her regular army, on the outbreak of the war, numbered 18,000 infantry and 5000 cavalry; and the fleet was in excellent condition. Early in August, 1563, Frederick II, at the head of an army of 28,000 men, invaded Halland from Scania, and captured the strong fortress of Elfsborg, after a few weeks' bombardment, thereby altogether cutting Sweden off from the North Sea. An attempt on the part of Eric to take the Danish fortress of Halmstad in October not only failed, but his retreating army was overtaken by the Danes at Mared, and defeated. On the sea nothing decisive took place; but the Swedish fleet of eighteen sail, under Bagge, sustained with honour the attack of the combined Danish-Lübeck fleet of thirty-three sail off the Isle of Öland. The campaign of 1564 was, on the whole, favourable to the Swedes. They conquered the Norwegian border-provinces of Jämtland and Herjedal, and even held the whole province of Trondhjem for a time. In Livonia, too, they captured the fortresses of Hapsal, Leal, and Löde, and drove the Danes almost entirely from the mainland. At sea there were two great battles, in the first of which, fought between Gothland and Öland 30 May, the Swedish flag-ship was blown up and the admiral captured; while in the second, fought off the northern point of Öland, at the beginning of August, the Swedes were victorious.

The war on land was marked by extraordinary ferocity, due partly, no doubt, to the increasing bitterness of national hatred, but primarily to the barbarous methods of Eric XIV, whose own conduct of the war in the Scandinavian peninsula was peculiar, his exploits consisting in the superintendence of the slaughter of defenceless prisoners whom his generals had captured. Nearly all Eric's instructions to his commanders contained orders "to defile, slay, burn, spoil, and

ravage foot by foot"—orders too often literally executed. The Danes naturally retaliated, sparing neither women nor children, and committing atrocities "of which neither Turks nor heathen were ever accused." In the campaign of 1565 the Swedish fleet was everywhere victorious. King Eric had done his best to make his navy strong and efficient; and on May 3 his admiral put to sea with no fewer than fifty ships. After destroying a small Lübeck squadron, he proceeded to the Sound, where he levied tolls upon 250 merchant-vessels, and thence sailed towards Lübeck. On June 4 he encountered the gallant Danish admiral, Herluf Trolle, off Bukov, between Rostock and Wismar, and defeated him, Trolle dying a few weeks afterwards of his wounds. On July 7 the Swedes won a still bloodier victory between Bornholm and Rügen, and for the remainder of the year were the masters of the Baltic, the Danish admiral not venturing to put to sea again. But the Danes were more than compensated for these reverses at sea by their victories on land. On October 20 Daniel Rantzau defeated a Swedish army far larger than his own at Axtorna; while, in Livonia, the Swedes lost the important fortress of Pernau.

A fresh attempt to mediate a peace, during the campaign of 1565, by the French envoy at Copenhagen, Charles Dançay, having failed, the war was energetically resumed early in 1566. Again the Swedes were victorious on the sea and unfortunate on land. Klas Horn put to sea with sixty-eight sail, scoured the Baltic without meeting a foe, once more levied tolls on the merchantmen passing through the Sound, and finally defeated the Danish-Lübeck fleet off Öland on July 26. The defeated fleet retired to Visby, and was there almost totally destroyed by a terrible storm, which the Swedish fleet safely weathered on the high sea. While the genius of Klas Horn thus enabled the Swedes to dominate the Baltic, the genius of Daniel Rantzau baffled all the efforts of the Swedish generals. After ravaging the province of Västergötland, Rantzau defeated at

Alungsås a Swedish army which attempted to bar his retreat, and encamped near Elfsborg. Eric XIV, as a last expedient, now sent Klas Horn against him; but the great naval hero died of the plague before he could take the command, and Rantzau, after fresh victories and devastations, went into winter quarters in Scania. The campaign of 1567 was equally inconclusive. Two expeditions against the Norwegian fortress of Akershus failed utterly; and in Scania the Swedish general, Henrik Klasson, was badly beaten at Runafjord, February 3. Against these reverses, however, could be set the conclusion, in the same month, of a defensive alliance between Sweden and Russia. In the autumn the Danish commander, Daniel Rantzau, penetrated into the heart of Östergötland, burning and ravaging without meeting with any resistance. On January 15, 1568, he also surprised the Swedish camp at Norrby, scattering the army and capturing the military chest and all the artillery. By this time, however, the Swedes had assembled a numerous army. They followed hard upon the heels of the far outnumbered Rantzau, who succeeded, nevertheless, in reaching the Danish border unscathed, after a masterly three weeks' retreat, scarcely less glorious than a signal victory in the field.

The deposition of King Eric (see cap. vi), in September, 1568, led to negotiations which resulted in a treaty signed, indeed, at Roskilde, Nov. 18, 1568, but repudiated as intolerable by the new king of Sweden, John III; while a Riksdag, held at Stockholm, declared that, instead of money, the Danish king should get "powder, lead, and pikes." The war, therefore, was resumed. A Danish attack on Reval, in July 1569, failed; but, on the other hand, the fortress of Varberg, which had remained in the hands of the Swedes for the last four years, was retaken (Dec. 4) by the Danes, who paid dearly for it by the loss of Daniel Rantzau, shot dead beneath its walls. As now the fortress of Elfsborg continued to be held by the Danes, Sweden was completely cut off from the Baltic; and

it also had become evident during the summer that she was no longer the mistress of the Baltic. Both countries, however, were growing weary of a war which had degenerated into a barbarous devastation of border provinces ; and in July, 1570, they accepted the mediation of the Emperor, and a peace congress assembled at Stettin, which resulted in the Peace of Stettin, 13 Dec. 1570. According to this treaty, the Danish king was to renounce all claims upon Sweden ; and the Swedish king was equally to renounce all his pretensions to the Norwegian-Danish provinces and the island of Gothland. The Swedes were also to pay 150,000 riksdalers in exchange for the surrender of Elfsborg. The question of "the three crowns" was to be settled by arbitration. The diocese of Reval-Osel was to be divided between Denmark and Sweden. On the whole the peace was decidedly disadvantageous to Sweden. In especial, the sum to be paid for the redemption of Elfsborg weighed heavily on a state already impoverished by a seven years' war ; and, in order to raise it, the peasantry, "and the towns still unburnt," had to surrender no less than a tenth of all their gold, silver, copper, tin, and cattle.

During the course of this seven years' war, Frederick II had narrowly escaped the fate of his cousin, Eric XIV. The war was as unpopular in Denmark as it was popular in Sweden ; and the closing of the Sound against foreign shipping, in order to starve out Sweden, had exasperated the maritime powers and all the Baltic states. Yet, despite foreign complications, despite the growing disaffection of the nobility, who more than once threatened to depose him, Frederick II, even after the almost total destruction of his fleet off the isle of Gothland, steadily pursued the policy he had set before himself of dominating Scandinavia. On New Year's Day, 1570, indeed, his difficulties seemed so overwhelming that he threatened to abdicate ; but the Peace of Stettin came in time to reconcile all parties ; and, though Frederick had now to relinquish his ambitious dream of reestablishing the Union of Kalmar, he

had at least succeeded in maintaining the supremacy of Denmark in the north, and favourably impressing his contemporaries. Thus the French minister at Copenhagen, Charles Dançay, expresses his amazement at the ease with which Frederick maintained a standing army which would have taxed the resources of any other sovereign of those times, and represented the Danish alliance to his court as a thing of real value.

After the peace, Frederick's policy became still more imperial. He now aspired to the dominion of all the seas which washed the Scandinavian coasts, and before he died he succeeded in suppressing the pirates who so long had haunted the Baltic and the German Ocean, and compelled all foreign ships to strike their topsail to Danish men-of-war, as a token of his right to rule the northern seas; moreover, Frederick erected the stately fortress of Kronborg, to guard the narrow channel of the Sound. Favourable political circumstances, no doubt, contributed to this general acknowledgment of Denmark's maritime greatness. The power of the Hansa had gone; the Dutch were enfeebled by their contest with Spain; England's sea-power had yet to be created; Spain, still the greatest of the maritime nations, was exhausting her resources in the vain effort to conquer the Dutch. Yet more even than to felicitous circumstances, Denmark owed her short-lived greatness to the group of statesmen and administrators whom Frederick II succeeded in gathering around him. For Frederick possessed the truly royal gift of discovering and employing great men irrespective of personal preferences, and even of personal injuries. Thus, Peder Oxe, who, as lord high steward from 1567 to 1575, saved the land from bankruptcy, and enriched the exchequer without imposing a single onerous tax, was entrusted with his office though he had been the king's most determined adversary. We may also mention the great chancellor, Joban Friis; his successor, the wise and noble Niels Kaas; the highly gifted Kristofer Valkendorf; the heroic

and saintly Herluf Trolle, the greatest admiral and the best beloved nobleman of his age ; and, finally, Daniel Rantzau, the Turenne of Denmark. With the assistance of these men and their fellows, Frederick succeeded in raising his kingdom to the rank of a great power, prosperous at home and respected abroad. Never before had Denmark been so well governed, never before had she possessed so many political celebrities nobly emulous for the common good. Frederick himself, with infinite tact and admirable self-denial, gave free scope to ministers whose superiority in their various departments he frankly recognised, rarely intervening personally unless absolutely called upon to do so. It is unanimously agreed that his influence, always great, was never so irresistible as at his own table. Ever the most gracious and amiable of hosts, and a peace-maker by nature, banquets were the occasions generally chosen by him for the smoothing away of difficulties, and the converting of hatreds into friendships. It was characteristic of the manners of his court that after dinner he would remove the last barrier in the way of general conviviality, by exclaiming, "The king is not at home!" Yet he was always able to stop the frolic at the right time, with the words, "The king has come home again." And it should be remarked that, while his son and successor, Christian IV, had frequently to be carried senseless from board to bed by his body-guards, Frederick II could always carry off a carouse with ease and dignity, though there can be but little doubt that his love of wine accelerated his end. He died at Antvorskob, on April 4, 1588, in the 52nd year of his reign, universally regretted. No other Danish king was ever so beloved by his people.

CHAPTER V.

THE REFORMATION IN SCANDINAVIA, 1520-1560.

THE period embraced by the last three chapters roughly coincides with the rupture between the new Scandinavian states and the ancient Church which led to the establishment of Lutheranism in northern Europe, a rupture mainly due to political causes. There was no inherent necessity for Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians to change their form of faith. The bulk of the people, at least in the first instance, and especially in Sweden and Norway, were by no means disposed to look to Wittenberg rather than to Rome for spiritual guidance. On the contrary, only external pressure, strenuously and persistently applied, enabled the Reformation ultimately to prevail. At a later day, indeed, when a new generation of Scandinavians, trained up in Lutheranism from its cradle, was confronted by an aggressive and alien Catholic reaction, we find, abundantly, the ardent explosive zeal of convinced converts ready to sacrifice everything for "the pure Gospel"; but originally, as we shall see, it was far too frequently not the word of the preacher, but the sword of the civil arm, which converted the people to the new teaching. It will be convenient briefly to summarise the whole process in the present chapter, beginning with Denmark as being not only the leading Scandinavian state of the period, but also the first, owing to her geographical position, to encounter the impact of the German Reformation.

The devotion of the bulk of the Scandinavian people to the ancient Church indicates that, on the whole, that Church had faithfully discharged her duty ; but, in the course of centuries, many inveterate abuses had impaired her efficiency. Here, as everywhere, worldliness had become one of the most salient vices of a society which was nothing if not unearthly. Bishops were appointed with very little regard to their spiritual qualifications. The avarice of the papal Curia had accentuated this abuse. Since Christian I's journey to Rome in 1479 the Danish kings had, for a pecuniary consideration, acquired the right of investiture over many of the cathedral chapters ; and henceforth posts in the royal chancellery became the stepping-stones to deaneries and canonries. The bishops themselves tenderly regarded the interests of their nephews and cousins ; and this royal and episcopal nepotism led to the introduction of many unworthy persons into the ranks of the hierarchy. Characteristic of the times is a letter to Christian II from his envoy at Rome promising the papal consent to the erection of a new cathedral chapter at Odense, under the patronage of the king, in return for a gratification of 2000 ducats for himself and the cardinal who had the matter in hand. "Myself, and the other gentlemen who get fiefs in the Church," wrote the Danish agent on this occasion, "will so repay your Grace therefor, that your Grace shall be put to no charge whatever thereby." Another ancillary abuse, marking a further development of aristocratic greed, was the gradual exclusion of the middle-class element from its due share of Church preferment. The charter of Frederick I provided that only native-born noblemen should be made bishops and prelates, though doctors, and other learned men, might exceptionally hold canonries.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century the Church had acquired an enormous amount of property in Denmark, either by purchase or testamentary disposition, all of which was absolutely lost to the State. A great deal of land was also set

apart for the payment of masses for the dead, and the consequent support of altars and altar-priests. Thus in the cathedral of Roskilde alone, there were fifty such altars with as many officiating priests. Such an accumulation of land under the dead hand was equally injurious to the Crown, the nobility, and the yeomanry. Many of the prelates, too, lived like temporal magnates, far more occupied with the cares of State than with the cure of souls, and, in the worse cases, entirely given up to hunting, gambling, and dissipation. Thus of Bishop Niels Stygge of Borglum it was said that, as a monk, he had lived a rigorously ascetic life, but that as bishop "he spent his time in sports and games, wanton jests, cards and dice, or oftentimes diverted himself with the twirling of darts when he was tired of games: otherwise he was never happy unless surrounded by harlots and jesters, jugglers and sycophants."

From the prelates this deterioration spread to the lower clergy. Many priests lived so openly with their "dejer" (doxies), that the irregularity almost ceased to be a scandal. We find bishops, in their charges, prohibiting priests from holding christening feasts in their houses, or solemnly churching their concubines. The mendicant friars were becoming a nuisance. They regularly partitioned the various dioceses among themselves when they went on term, as they called their begging quest, and brought home waggon-loads of alms from far and near. Most of the convents had become refuges for the unmarried daughters of the aristocracy. Yet there was a bright side to the picture. The people at large were devoutly disposed; and the Church satisfied their religious cravings. At no later period of Danish history can she so truly be said to have been their mother as she was then. She was the first to welcome them when they came into the world, and she sent them forth on their last journey reassured by her promises and comforted by her sacraments. Her impressive and touching ceremonies familiarised the people with the sublime and consolatory thought that there was something higher and better

than the world around them. In the summer the priests and deacons, followed by their parishioners, proceeded, with cross and banner, from village to village, praying for a bountiful harvest, blessing house and home, flocks and herds, fields and orchards. Every season was consecrated by the Church, and had its own special significance. Never before had pilgrimages been so numerous and so frequent as at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Many young nobles journeyed to the Holy Land, to wash away their sins in the waters of Jordan, after encountering strange adventures by the way, like Mogens Gyldenstjerne, for instance, who, in 1522, took part in the defence of Rhodes against the Turks. The shrine of St Peter at Rome, and the shrine of St James at Compostella, were favourite resorts of Danish pilgrims; the Danish-born St Severin, archbishop of Köln, was especially honoured at Halmstrup in Sjælland; and the Blessed Virgin drew thousands of worshippers to her lowly church at Karup in the midst of the Jutland heaths. Of the sick and poor the ancient Church had always taken especial care; and the half spiritual, half temporal hospices in the chief cities, known as the Houses of the Holy Ghost, were in many places converted into monasteries of the Augustinian rule, and placed in communication with the parent monastery at Rome. Private charity assisted the efforts of the Church. Thus, to take but a single typical instance, the rich burgess and doctor of medicine, Klaus Denne, devoted his whole fortune to the foundation of St Anne's Hospital in Copenhagen, "for sick and poor men who are wont to lie about the streets and lanes, and can find no shelter in their sickness."

Moreover within the Church herself there were reformatory movements. The superior of the Gray Friars at Odense, Laurence Brandsen, introduced "the strict observance" into the houses subject to him; and he was supported by Queen Dorothea, and, after her death, by Queen Christina, who adopted St Francis of Assisi as her patron saint, and founded

convents in Copenhagen and Odense. Many of the bishops endeavoured to improve and multiply the church services, and utilised the newly invented art of printing for that purpose. A beginning was made by Karl Rönnov, bishop of Odense, who had a corrected and revised breviary printed in 1483 at Lübeck for use in his diocese; and many other prelates followed his example.

Humanism, meanwhile, was making its way into Denmark, and amongst the clergy it found many disciples. The most notable of these men was Paulus Eliae or Heliae. Born at Varberg, about 1480, of a Danish father and a Swedish mother, he was educated at Skara and became a monk in the Carmelite monastery at Elsinore. Here he met with a learned Dutch humanist, Frans Wormsen, who profoundly influenced him. Eliae was impressed by the decline of the Church, and in 1517 he issued a Latin dissertation severely animadverting upon the sale of indulgences and other abuses. He took the standpoint of Erasmus and became a zealous moralist, greeting Luther, on his first appearance, with enthusiasm as a fellow-worker. The parting of ways came later when Luther deliberately broke with the Church. In 1519 Christian II appointed Eliae professor of theology in connexion with the recently reconstituted university of Copenhagen, and, at the same time, summoned Mathias Gabler and Martin Reinhart from Wittenberg, the first to teach Greek, and the second theology. The latter was permitted to preach in German at the church of St Nicholas; and thus it came about that Lutheranism was first taught in Denmark. On his return from Sweden in 1521 Christian II sent Reinhart back to Wittenberg to induce Andreas Karlstadt, or Luther himself, to come to Denmark to assist him in his projected reforms. By this time, however, Luther had already been excommunicated, and shortly afterwards disappeared inside the Wartburg. Reinhart never returned; and, though Karlstadt accepted the royal invitation and came to Copenhagen, he speedily quitted it

in disgust when he was forbidden to preach against the Pope.

Christian himself always subordinated religion to politics, and was Papist or Lutheran according to circumstances. He began by forbidding the university to condemn Luther, but after the Stockholm Massacre he was anxious to stand well with both Pope and Emperor, though, to the last, he treated the Church more like a foe than a friend, elevating and deposing archbishops and bishops at will, flinging canons into prison, and unblushingly despoiling the richer dioceses of their property, in defiance alike of Pope and statute book. He retained, indeed, the Catholic form of church worship, and, though constantly at war with the Curia, never seems to have questioned the papal supremacy. On the flight of Christian II and the election of Frederick I, the Church recovered her jurisdiction; and everything was placed on the old footing. In all ecclesiastical matters the Pope was to be the ultimate arbiter; but every appeal was to be subject to the previous consent of the Danish prelates. Moreover, for the more effectual extirpation of heresy, it was provided by the royal charter of 1524, imposed upon the king by the dominant Catholic magnates, that no heretic disciple of Luther should be permitted "to preach or teach, privily or openly, anything contrary to the faith of the Holy Church, our most holy father the Pope, or the Church of Rome"; and that all such preachers should "be punished with loss of life and goods, wherever they may be found in our realm." Moreover the prelates endeavoured still further to strengthen their position by making a solemn alliance and compact with the temporal members of the Rigsraad on June 28, 1524, whereby the whole Senate undertook, in confirmation of the royal charter, to visit all enemies of the holy Christian faith with imprisonment and the other penalties provided by the canon law.

But the prelates were soon to discover that the cooperation of the nobility was but a feeble support. The greatest

dignitary in the land, the lord high steward Mogens Göie, openly declared himself a Lutheran. Many of his peers joined him; and, though the majority of the Rigsraad, during King Frederick's lifetime, still held to the old Church, the wealth and splendour of the bishops excited the cupidity and rapacity of the poorer members of the aristocracy, and widened the breach already existing between the temporal and spiritual estates. The newly elected and still insecure German king, who had no desire to quarrel with his Danish bishops so long as danger threatened him from abroad, at first remained neutral; but in the autumn of 1525 the current of Lutheranism began to run so strongly in Denmark as to threaten to whirl away every opposing obstacle. This novel and disturbing phenomenon was mainly due to the zeal and eloquence of the ex-monk, Hans Tausen, who had been sent by his prior, in 1523, to complete his theological education at Wittenberg, and returned to the Johannite monastery at Viborg in Jutland a convinced Lutheran. All Viborg was soon converted by his preaching; and, when the monks closed the cathedral doors against him, his followers burst them open, and Tausen proceeded to defy his bishop from the pulpit. The fame of his eloquence soon spread to Copenhagen; and in the autumn of 1526 the king, who was really a crypto-Lutheran, took Tausen under his protection, appointed him his chaplain, and permitted him to preach the new doctrine. In the following year Frederick went a good step further. By the Odense recess (Aug. 20) both confessions were placed on a footing of equality in Denmark, the bishops being too divided and timorous to offer an effectual united resistance.

The three ensuing years were especially favourable for the Reformation, as during that time the king had unlooked for opportunities for filling the vacant episcopal sees of Sjælland and Fünen with men of his own choice; while the agitation against the old Church was sensibly promoted by the open encouragement given by the court to the Lutheran preachers.

In March, 1529, the aged bishop of Fünen, Jens Andersen Beldenak, resigned in favour of his coadjutor, the royal nominee, Knud Gyldenstjerne, who thus got possession of the see, though canonically he was no bishop, as he was never confirmed by the Pope, nor even by the Danish archbishop, whose own election remained unconfirmed by the Roman Curia: both prelates therefore were absolutely dependent on the king, as he intended them to be. A few weeks after Beldenak's resignation died Lage Urne, bishop of Roskilde; and, as his successor, the king appointed Jacob Rönnov. But, before being nominated and recommended to the cathedral chapter, he was obliged to give the king the most positive assurance of his loyalty. At the same time, he undertook "that, if anyone comes into the diocese of Roskilde, whether in town or country, who would preach the Holy Gospel clearly and plainly, as it can be proved from Holy Scripture, or if the priests or monks in the diocese wish to marry," he would not allow them violently and unjustly to be attacked; but, if any should bring accusation against them therefor, he would cite accuser and accused before the king and the Rigsraad. This startling violation of his own solemnly sworn charter demonstrates that King Frederick had all along intended to establish a purely national Church at the first convenient opportunity.

Rönnov having complied with these revolutionary demands, Frederick proceeded to nominate and confirm him as bishop of Roskilde, and thereupon sent him to the chapter, who, naturally, could not but elect him. On presenting himself subsequently to the king with his certificate of election, the king confirmed the choice of the chapter as if he were the head of the Church. From the Catholic point of view, Rönnov was, of course, no bishop at all; and his own misgivings on this head led him secretly to apply for a regular consecration to Jørgen Skodborg, who, since his expulsion from the archiepiscopal see of Lund (which Frederick had

conferred upon Aage Jepsen), had received regular confirmation and consecration at Rome, where he was now residing, and was thus Rönnov's proper metropolitan. But Rönnov got little comfort from the archbishop *in partibus*, who simply counselled him to apply direct to the Pope for confirmation, a thing which Rönnov prudently refrained from doing during King Frederick's lifetime.

The king himself continued steadily to pursue his self-prescribed path. Thus in 1532, when Archbishop Aage Jepsen, dissatisfied with his ambiguous position, resigned the see of Lund, the king bestowed it upon Torben Bilde, who was obliged beforehand to sign an undertaking similar to that of Rönnov, binding him to tolerate the evangelical preachers, and to allow his clergy to marry. Simultaneously Frederick gave the Reformers every encouragement, even conniving at their excesses, especially at Malmö, the first town in Denmark where the Reformation, in the course of 1529, completely triumphed, and where the two burgomasters, Jorgen Kock and Jep Nielsen, both pronounced Lutherans, outraged the feelings of their Catholic fellow-citizens with perfect impunity. The reformatory movement in Denmark was naturally promoted by Sleswick-Holstein influence. Frederick's eldest son, Duke Christian, had, since 1527, resided at Haderslev, where he collected round him Lutheran teachers from Germany, and made his court the centre of the propaganda of the new doctrine. Copenhagen at first remained neutral, most of the magistrates there looking askance at the Reformation, till the inflammatory sermons of Hans Tausen, in the St Nicholas Church, dissolved their indifference and set the whole city in an uproar. The Catholics found an able and courageous defender in Bishop Rönnov, who openly withheld Tausen; yet the Reformation continued to gain ground in the capital, and, indeed, when monks and priests were insulted in the street, and Catholic churches were invaded and desecrated by fanatical mobs, it required no little courage to profess the old faith.

When the Catholics appealed to the king to enforce the paragraphs of his charter which proscribed heretical teaching, Frederick adroitly but disingenuously evaded the point by declaring that he had only permitted the preaching of the Gospel, which surely could not be regarded as heretical. Then the prelates demanded a free and open discussion; and the king at last complied with their wishes by summoning a Herredag to Copenhagen in the summer of 1530. Twenty of the best Protestant preachers assembled here under the leadership of Tausen and his colleague Sadolin, whilst the Catholics were principally represented by Paulus Eliae. There was a good deal of violent preaching on the part of the Lutherans, which led to further disturbances, but no formal public disputation, neither side being able to agree as to the conditions or the judges of the controversy. The king tried to please each party in turn, with the usual result of offending both. He encouraged the preachers to testify so far as they could prove their contentions from Holy Scripture, but, on the other hand, he felt obliged to pay some regard to the four Catholic bishops of Jutland, who were still powerful both in their own dioceses and in the Rigsraad. The Odense recess, therefore, remained unrepealed, contrary to the expectations of the preachers; and, so long as it continued in force, the spiritual jurisdiction of the bishops, and, consequently, their authority over the preachers, who were for establishing a new doctrine and forcibly expelling the Catholic priests from their churches, remained valid.

Frederick's double-dealing was due partly to his dread of alienating the still dominant aristocracy by a too flagrant breach of the charter, especially as Christian II was still a hostile force to be reckoned with; and partly from a monarch's natural dislike of the revolutionary agitations of the Lutherans, which threatened to break all bounds. The Danish preachers were no longer content with liberty of preaching. They now came forward as "free priests," and claimed the right to administer

the sacraments, solemnise marriages, and ordain the clergy, contrary to the law and in despite of the legislature; for even the royal authorisation to preach the Gospel could not make canonical priests of them. As a matter of fact, the old and the new religion could not subsist side by side in a city like Copenhagen, which was now dominated by the preachers; yet the king and Bishop Rönnov, before quitting it on August 2, 1530, enjoined a compromise whereby the canons of Vor Frue Kirke, the chief church in Copenhagen, were to be permitted to read, sing and say Latin masses, as they had done heretofore, whilst the evangelical preachers were also to be free to preach God's Word and say the Danish mass in the same church on Sundays. The magistrates of Copenhagen vehemently protested against this absurd ordinance, and warned Frederick that the only result of it would be a dangerous riot with which the magistrates might be unable to cope. The king left this warning unheeded. The consequence was that on December 27, 1530, a mob, led by the burgomaster Ambrosius Bogbinder, burst into the church, hewed down all the sacred images, destroyed the beautifully carved choir stalls, and were only ejected towards the evening by the personal intervention of Hans Tausen. By command of the king the church was then closed. The inevitable ecclesiastical crisis was postponed only by the superior stress of two urgent political events—Christian II's invasion of Norway (p. 31), and the outbreak, in 1533, of "Grevens Fejde" (pp. 52, 53).

The ultimate triumph of so devoted a Lutheran as Christian III sealed the fate of the Catholic Church in Denmark. That it should, nevertheless, have been necessary for the victorious king to proceed against the bishops and their friends in the Rigsraad, by way of a *coup d'état* (p. 61), is sufficient proof that the Catholic party was still considered formidable. It was upon the now helpless and imprisoned bishops and the Catholic senators that the new king threw the whole blame for the dire misfortunes which had visited the land during

the Civil War. Hence the vindictive character of the recess adopted by the Rigsdag of 1536, which enacted that the bishops should for ever forfeit their temporal and spiritual authority; that the existing episcopate itself should be abolished; and that other Christian bishops, or superintendents, should be set in their places to teach and preach the holy Gospel and God's Word to the people. Moreover, that the Crown of Denmark might be enabled to defend the realm against foreign and domestic enemies, all the property of the bishops and prelates was transferred for ever to the Crown, for the good of king and commonwealth. The king was also henceforth to have the right of presentation to all prelatures and other benefices hitherto possessed by the bishops. The monks were free to quit their cloisters; but those who preferred to remain were to have God's Word preached to them. The recess very cautiously avoids committing itself to any sweeping ecclesiastical change; but it is easy to read between the lines the desire of its framers gradually to abolish Catholicism; and it left it to the king, the Rigsraad, and "learned and reasonable men thereto appointed," to take whatever further measures might be deemed necessary.

Shortly after the close of the Rigsdag at which the recess was adopted, eighteen members of the Evangelical party, including Tausen and Sadolin, and eight leading Catholics, were summoned to a conference at Odense, which was continued at Haderslev; and a Church ordinance in Latin, based upon the canons of Luther, Melanchthon, and Bugenhagen, of an essentially practical and, on the whole, conciliatory character, was drawn up. Christian sent it in 1537 to Wittenberg. On being returned with Luther's approval, it was carefully supervised at a Herredag held at Copenhagen by the German reformer, Johann Bugenhagen, who had come to Denmark, at the express invitation of the king, in July, 1537, and was at once entrusted with the organisation of the newly-established Danish Church. As a final result of his labours, a Lutheranised

revision of the ordinance of Haderslev was by him submitted to the Rigsraad, which, while approving of it in general, at the same time suggested that the clergy should be directed to deal indulgently with those backsliders who would not at once receive the sacraments—a pretty plain hint that the old Church still had adherents in government circles whose feelings were worth considering. Finally, the king promulgated the new Church ordinance independently of the Raad on September 2, 1537.

On the same day the new superintendents or bishops—for the latter designation ultimately prevailed—were consecrated in Vor Frue Kirke by Bugenhagen, who himself had only priest's orders. This was a notable breach with traditional practice, involving the loss of the apostolical succession by the Danish episcopate. This is the more remarkable, as there was strong contemporary feeling on this very point; and the apostolical succession need not have been lost, inasmuch as the Norwegian Catholic bishop, Hans Reff, who had embraced the evangelical teaching, might very well have consecrated the new bishops. But the audacity of the Danish reformers prevailed; and the king, as the new head of the Church, gladly supported them. The seven superintendents who were consecrated on September 2 had all worked zealously for the cause of the Reformation. The archbishopric was abolished; but the see of Sjælland seems to have assumed a sort of primacy from the first. The new Jutland bishops were also Danes; but the bishopric of Ribe was given to a German, Hans Vandal, who could not conduct visitations in his diocese without the aid of an interpreter. In 1542 he was succeeded by Tausen, who in the meantime had been appointed professor of theology at Copenhagen and Roskilde. The difficulties encountered by these new superintendents led to a revision of the Church ordinance at the Herredag of Odense, June 14, 1539, which was further amplified by the so-called Articles of Ribe in 1542, which laid down stricter rules for the ordination of priests. Thus the

work of reformation was finally consolidated; and the constitution of the Danish Church has practically continued the same to the present day.

Naturally enough, Catholicism could not wholly or immediately be dislodged by the teaching of Luther. It had struck deep roots into the habits and feelings of the people; and traces of its survival were everywhere distinguishable a whole century after the triumph of the Reformation. Despite the rigorous inquisitorial visitations of the superintendents, sacred images continued to be adored, candles to be lit before the altars of the Virgin, and rosaries to be freely used; while crowds of pilgrims frequented Torum, Edensted, Bistrup, Karup, and other favourite shrines. Catholic practices were also observed in many places; and it is said that the nuns at Maribo kept to their strict rule as late as 1564. Not till the old generation had completely died out can the Reformation be said to have become truly national. Catholicism lingered longest in cathedral chapters. Here were to be found men of talent and ability, proof against the eloquence of Hans Tausen or Peder Plad, and quite capable of controverting their theories—men like Eliae, for instance, indisputably the greatest Danish theologian of his day, a critic and a scholar, whose voice was drowned amidst the clash of conflicting creeds. Most of these crypto-Catholics had been obliged to submit to the Church ordinance, but they continued to argue against the Reformation, and openly refused to receive the sacraments in the Lutheran form. To the last their influence over the higher and more cultivated classes was considerable; and even in the public disputations, authorised from time to time, notably those of 1543 and 1544, on the mass and the sacraments, they more than held their own against the assaults of the Lutheran controversialists.

In Norway the Reformation was accepted with comparative apathy. In the half German town of Bergen, Danish and German Lutherans had been busy during the twenties; but

the people were indifferent, and the king was inclined at first to leave the old Church ceremonies and customs alone. Thus the lower Catholic clergy provisionally retained their cures; and even so late as the death of Christian III (1559) the Reformation here had not gained much ground. The new superintendents, indeed, did their best to enforce the new Church ordinances, and in the towns they met with some success; but in the country parts progress was slow. There was, moreover, a great lack of pastors; and sufficient schools could not be founded for want of means. In some dioceses barely half of the vacant cures could be filled; many churches had to be pulled down and many parishes enlarged—an unhappy state of affairs in a country so vast, rugged, and difficult of access. Thus the Reformation was at first spiritually detrimental to Norway. It created no literature; it did little for education; it excited no enthusiasm. Nay, at first, Danish pastors refused to risk their lives among the wild population for the miserable stipends which had sufficed for the wants of the Catholic priests. Even Peder Plad, who interested himself in Norway, complained that the people were like sheep without a shepherd. The result was a curious blending of old and new. On Sundays Lutheranism was preached in the churches, and the catechism was taught in the schools; but on the old saints' days the people made pilgrimages to the ancient shrines; and the Blessed Virgin and the saints were appealed to in all times of distress and danger.

If in Norway the Reformation was received with indifference, in Iceland it encountered downright hostility. The two Catholic bishops of Skalholt and Holar, Ogmund Palsson and Jon Aresen, refused to submit to the new Church ordinance. But, when Ogmund, owing to the infirmity of age, was obliged to have a coadjutor, the choice of the government fell upon Gissur Einersen, a crypto-Lutheran, who was ordained bishop by Peder Plad in 1540, and returned to Iceland the same summer. He found the whole island in an uproar. The

Danish governor, Didrik of Minden, whilst on a visit to Bishop Ogmund, had been murdered for incivility by the retainers of his aged host ; and the Althing, or Diet, had not only pronounced the bishop innocent, but patriotically rejected the new Church ordinance. The opposition was led by the Catholic bishops ; and it was resolved at Copenhagen to use force. Christopher Hvitsfeld was accordingly sent to Iceland with a body of troopers ; and Bishop Ogmund was seized and carried to Denmark, where he died in 1542. The Church ordinance was then enforced ; and the one remaining Catholic bishop, Jon Aresen, submitted. The Reformation made little progress till the death of Gissur Einersen in 1548 ; whereupon the Lutherans elected as his successor Martin Einersen, while the Catholics chose Abbot Sigurd of Thykkvabo. Bishop Aresen now issued from his retirement, warmly supported the abbot, and used the opportunity to re-enthrone Catholicism in Iceland. When therefore Christian III confirmed the election of the Lutheran candidate, Aresen raised the standard of revolt, appealed for help to Pope and Kaiser, and declared from the high altar of his church, in full canonicals and surrounded by his clergy, that he would rather die than be false to Holy Church. He then seized and imprisoned his rival, Bishop Martin, administered the vacant see of Skalholt, restored all the monasteries, and, at the Althing of 1550, expelled the royal governor Laurids Mule, and drove him from the island. Unfortunately for himself, the old bishop could not use his victory with moderation. In attempting to subdue by force of arms Dade Gudmundson, the one man in the island who still resisted him, he was defeated, captured, handed over to the Danish authorities, and by them beheaded together with his sons, November 7, 1550. In 1551 a Danish fleet arrived and restored order ; the Althing swore allegiance to Christian III and his son ; and the Reformation met with no further open resistance in Iceland, though it assumed a peculiar national character which it has preserved to the present day.

In Sweden the Reformation was far less a popular, and far more a political movement than it had been in Denmark, despite the fact that the last three Swedish archbishops had been violently anti-national. We know but little of the condition of the Church of Sweden at the final rupture of the Union of Kalmar. That some of the prelates were men of learning and ability is indisputable; but, on the other hand, it is equally clear that many of the lower clergy were very ignorant. Bishop Johannes Magni, writing in 1525, says there were very few priests who could preach the Word of God to the people, or read the Scriptures, much less expound them. Nor was their morality of a very apostolic character. In 1523, for instance, we hear of a chaplain of the governor, Sten Sture, striking one of his colleagues dead with a battle-axe; "manslayers and drunkards" were not uncommon among the parish priests; and the rule of celibacy was so generally infringed, that it was usual for the bishops to impose a tax upon those priests who desired to keep concubines or will away their property to their children. Nevertheless there is no reason for assuming that the spiritual condition of the Church in Sweden was any worse than it was elsewhere, or that reformation from within was impossible. In favourable circumstances the Swedish Church might have recovered herself without a rupture with Rome, for she had not yet forfeited the affections of the people; but the circumstances were not favourable. To begin with, she was leaderless. At the beginning of the Reformation all the episcopal sees but two were vacant. The archbishop, Gustavus Trolle, was an outlawed exile; the bishops of Skara and Strengnäs had perished in the Stockholm Massacre; the bishops of Västerås and Åbo had both died in 1522; Ingemar, bishop of Växiö, was old and decrepit. The sole champion of the Church in the higher hierarchy was Hans Brask, bishop of Linköping, a true patriot and an experienced statesman, but of a native caution accentuated by the timidity of old age. His position

was somewhat strengthened when Gustavus Vasa, in 1522 and 1523, filled up the vacant sees of Skara, Strengnäs, and Västerås, especially as the energetic Petrus Jacobi, formerly chancellor and one of the warmest adherents of the Stures, had been appointed to the latter see; but, towards the end of 1523, Gustavus, always morbidly suspicious of the Sture influence, fastened a quarrel upon Chancellor Peder, as he was generally called, and superseded him in the see of Västerås by Petrus Magni, a monk of Vadstena, just then at Rome on a mission from his monastery. The archiepiscopal dignity was finally conferred (Sept. 1523) on the papal legate Johannes Magni, a man of middle-class Swedish parentage, born at Linköping in 1488, and formerly a student at Louvain under Pope Adrian VI, who had sent him home from Rome, "to extirpate the Lutheran errors and confirm the faithful." A plausible, well-meaning ecclesiastic, he had easily won Gustavus's favour by a show of compliance, but he was far too pliable a character to hold the primacy successfully in a period of acute crisis.

But it was not enough that the new bishops should be elected by the cathedral chapters: their election required confirmation by the Pope; and serious difficulties at once arose, which resulted in Gustavus's definitive breach with the Papal See. Already, in the middle of June, 1523, immediately after the election of the king, the Swedish Råd had petitioned the Pope for a primate better able to promote peace and harmony than Gustavus Trolle. Three months later the king himself took the matter in hand, and wrote several letters to the Pope, begging him to appoint new bishops "who would defend the rights of the Church without detriment to the Crown." He was especially urgent for the confirmation of Johannes Magni as archbishop in the place of "that rebellious and bloodthirsty scoundrel, Gustavus Trolle." If the Pope would confirm the election of his bishops, Gustavus promised in all things to be an obedient son of the Church. Scarcely

had this letter been despatched than the king was surprised by a papal Bull ordering the reinstalment of Gustavus Trolle forthwith. The action of the Curia on this occasion was due to its conviction of the imminent triumph of Christian II and the instability of Gustavus's position. It was a conviction shared by the rest of Europe; but, none the less, it was another of the many perhaps unavoidable blunders of the Curia at this difficult and inscrutable period. Its immediate effect was the loss of the Swedish Church. Gustavus could not accept as primate a convicted traitor like Trolle. He protested in the sharpest language not only to the college of cardinals but to the Pope himself, that, unless Johannes Magni were recognised by Rome as archbishop of Upsala, he was determined of his own royal authority henceforth to order the affairs of the Church in his realm to the glory of God and the satisfaction of all Christian men. Still more threatening became his tone when he learnt that the Pope, setting aside the choice of the cathedral chapter of Skara, had bestowed that see upon Giovanni Francesco of Potenza. In a letter dated November 2, 1523, he declared outright that, if the Pope refused or delayed to confirm the election of his bishops, he would have them confirmed by the one and only high-priest, Christ Himself, rather than allow religion in Sweden to suffer by the negligence of the Papal See. The newly appointed bishop of Skara he refused to recognise. His Holiness might be quite persuaded, he said, that he would never allow foreigners to preside over his churches. But Clement VII, who, in 1523, succeeded Adrian VI, was immovable. The utmost he would concede was that Johannes Magni should remain coadjutor of Upsala till the affair of Archbishop Trolle had been investigated. Gustavus made no further effort to overcome the obstinacy of the Pope; his thoughts had already turned in another direction.

The first tidings of Luther which reached Sweden are contained in a letter written from Rome, in 1518, by Per Måansson, subsequently bishop of Vesterås; but it was only

when native Lutherans began to spread a knowledge of the new doctrine in Sweden that it attracted public attention. The first of these propagandists was Olavus Petri. Born at Örebro in 1497, he was brought up with his brother Laurentius at a Carmelite monastery in his native place, completing his education at Wittenberg in 1516-1519, where he was promoted to the degree of Magister, and made the personal acquaintance of Luther, whom he accompanied on one of his visitations through northern Germany. Like his master he was of an ardent, energetic temperament; certainly eloquent but no theologian. On returning home he was ordained a deacon (1520) by Matthias, bishop of Strengnäs, and became a member of the cathedral chapter. It was here that he first made the acquaintance of his lifelong friend, Canon Laurentius Andreæ, subsequently archdeacon of Upsala.

Lars Anderson, as he is called in Swedish, was born in 1482, educated at Rome, and returned to his native land one of the most learned men of his day. Although fifteen years the senior of Olavus Petri, he was so far carried away by his junior's eloquence as to become his disciple, though his calmer judgment operated as a brake upon the headlong impetuosity of his young friend. That Petri's enthusiasm frequently exceeded the bounds of charity the following anecdote sufficiently proves. His father, a pious Catholic, on his death in 1521, bequeathed a small piece of land to the Carmelites of his native place, that masses might be celebrated at his burial. But Olavus and his brother Laurentius refused to part with the land even when their bitterly afflicted mother reproached them for their unfilial conduct. So early as 1523 Olavus was notorious as an heretical teacher. Gustavus himself seems to have been neutral or indifferent, till on the occasion of his election by the Riksdag of Strengnäs, in the same year, he heard preach some "young men who were Master Olof's disciples, whereat he was surprised, and yet the same pleased

him well." He had several interviews with Olavus subsequently, and, not unnaturally, expressed his amazement when the young man confidently informed him that the Pope was Antichrist; but he consulted the older and graver Laurentius Andreae, who told him how "Doctor Martinus had clipped the wings of the Pope, the cardinals, and the big bishops," which could not fail to be pleasing intelligence to a monarch who never was an admirer of episcopacy, while the rich revenues of the Church, accumulated in the course of centuries, were a tempting object to the impecunious ruler of an impoverished people.

Nevertheless, but for his pressing financial needs, it is highly improbable that so eminently practical a ruler as Gustavus Vasa would ever have added to his innumerable difficulties a struggle with his prelates. With him, as with Christian II, religious were always subordinated to political questions. That the reformer had won Gustavus at Strengnäs was soon patent. A few months later Laurentius Andreae was made the king's private secretary; by the middle of 1524 he had become archdeacon of Upsala and a senator; while Olavus Petri, the same year, was appointed recorder of Stockholm. Master Olof's zeal soon led him, though still only a deacon, to preach Lutheranism in the chief church of the capital; but his violence repelled the graver members of his audience; and, while some applauded, others flung stones at him. The excesses in the capital of his German associates, the Anabaptists, Melchior Buntmakare and Knipperdolling, who egged on the lower classes of the people to attack and desecrate the Catholic churches, also excited general disgust, especially in the country parts, where the deeply religious peasantry threatened to come in force and purge "that corrupt Gomorrah," as they called Stockholm, of all Lutherans and heretics. Finally, the king and Andreae intervened; and the Anabaptists were expelled the kingdom. Gustavus and the archdeacon were for allowing the new teaching to spread

quietly and gradually. Their conduct was eminently prudent throughout, but clearly unfair to the Catholics and disingenuous. Thus, in a letter written to the monks of the monastery of Vadstena, St Bridget's great foundation, Gustavus expresses himself as hurt at the rumour that "any new, less Catholic doctrine" is spreading in his kingdom. The monks must abstain from such frivolous utterances. "Prove all things and hold to that which is good" was his motto. If any new doctrine were found in any book published by Martin Luther or anyone else, such doctrine was not lightly to be rejected but tested by Holy Scripture. The king further opined that Martin was much too great to be confuted by such simple folks as he and they. When Bishop Brask besought him to suppress Luther's writings, Gustavus (June 8, 1524) declared himself in favour of the fullest discussion of the whole subject, and refused to persecute anyone for his religious convictions. The bishop, unsupported by the government, could henceforth only attack "the Lutheran, or rather the Luciferan heresy," in pastorals and charges.

On Sexagesima Sunday, 1525, Olavus Petri still further defied the ecclesiastical authorities by breaking his vow of celibacy and taking unto himself a wife. Old Bishop Brask could scarce believe his ears when he heard it. He at once wrote to the king and the archbishop, charging them to punish the offender. The archbishop did nothing. The king replied that he had sent for Master Olof, who declared himself ready and willing to defend his breach of ancient custom before any lawful tribunal. Gustavus added that it seemed strange to him that a man should be banned on account of marriage which the law of God had never forbidden, while immoral clerics should remain unblamed by the law of the Pope. In the same letter the king defended himself against the charge of employing for state purposes Church property which had been dedicated to pious uses. Finally he urged the plea of necessity, in his case a very real one.

A fresh step towards the promotion of the new teaching was the translation of the New Testament into Swedish—as is generally supposed, by Laurentius Andreae and Olavus Petri—despite the opposition of Hans Brask. It was published in 1526. Simultaneously Gustavus began a systematic attack upon the monks and monasteries. At a popular conference held at Upsala he complained that there were too many unnecessary priests in the realm. All the monasteries, he said, were crammed with monks who were little better than vermin, as they consumed all the kindly fruits of the earth to the detriment of the people. In January, 1526, he proceeded from words to deeds, and began the suppression of the religious houses by sequestering the monastery of Gripsholm; but the affair caused such general indignation that Gustavus felt obliged, in May, to offer some justification of his conduct. A few months later there was an open rupture between the king and the archbishop. Johannes Magni had at last convinced himself that the king was incorrigible, while Gustavus was eager to reject a tool he could no longer use. He began by frightening the primate by a sudden accusation of treason, and then sent him as ambassador to Poland, hoping that the timid old man would never venture back. His hope was justified. On reaching Dantzig, Magni, congratulating himself on his escape, wrote to Hans Brask requesting his more spirited brother of Linköping to take charge of his diocese.

Hans Brask was now completely isolated: single-handed he had to defend the Church against her oppressors and despoilers. Of the newly elected bishops, three were still unconfirmed by the Pope, and the fourth, Petrus Magni, kept in the background. The burden was far too heavy for the shoulders of one man; but, in justice to Hans Brask, it should be added that to the utmost of his ability he fought for his cause and his convictions, and, well aware that the majority of the yeomanry were on his side, he braved for a time the wrath of the king himself. Irritated by this persistent opposition,

Gustavus abandoned the no longer tenable position of a moderator, and came openly forward as an antagonist. He commanded Brask to destroy his printing-press at Söderköping, from which he was issuing numerous anti-Lutheran pamphlets; and, when the indefatigable prelate transferred his press to Copenhagen, Gustavus forbade him to print and circulate among the common folk anything not previously submitted to himself. At a meeting of the Senate at Vadstena in 1526, two-thirds of the Church's tithes had already been applied to the payment of the national debt.

Still more significant of Gustavus's anti-ecclesiastical policy was his treatment of the two rebellious prelates, Peder the chancellor and Martin Knut Eriksson, who in the middle of 1525 had fled to Norway and placed themselves under the protection of Olof, the last Catholic archbishop of Trondhjem. Only after protracted negotiations did Gustavus succeed in obtaining their extradition. The unfortunate men were treated with shameful contumely. First they were set backwards on broken-down hacks and paraded through the streets of Stockholm, the chancellor with a crown of straw on his head and a filthy wooden sword by his side, and Master Knut wearing a mitre made of rushes; while buffoons ran alongside, deriding them and shouting to the crowd that here were the men who would rather be traitors than approve the teaching of Dr Martin Luther. On February 18, 1527, these martyrs of Catholicism were arraigned for treason before a tribunal consisting of four spiritual and six temporal senators. The king himself prosecuted; and the accused were condemned to the gibbet by the temporal assessors, after the spiritual judges had disputed the legality of the tribunal and withdrawn from it. The cruel sentences were executed forthwith. That two prelates should have thus been treated like the commonest felons caused widespread dismay. Yet Bishop Brask wrote to a friend at Rome, at the end of the same year, that the king's heart was in the hand of God, "who can always make Saul Paul."

Three months later the old man begins to despair. "If the Lord shorten not these days," he wrote to the fugitive primate, "we have naught to look forward to but the dissolution of the flesh."

Nor was it only in clerical circles that the king's conduct was disapproved. We have already seen (p. 45) that the people at large were violently anti-Lutheran, and prepared to fight for the old Church and faith. But it was Gustavus's great good fortune that no capable Catholic leader could be found; and he wisely resolved to complete the work he had begun while circumstances favoured him both at home and abroad. He began by summoning a Riksdag, which met on June 16, 1527, in the hall of the Black Friars' monastery at Vesterås. The bishops, well aware of what was coming, previously held a secret meeting, behind locked doors, in the church of St Egidius, and bound themselves by oath never to desert the Pope or tolerate Luther, and to protest beforehand against any contrary resolutions which might be adopted. This protest which, in the event, they durst not publish, was found, fifteen years later, beneath the floor of Vesterås cathedral. The same day the Riksdag was opened; and the worst fears of the prelates were justified. The royal propositions set forth the needs of the government, and urged the Estates to consider the best means of satisfying them. Brask, knowing that the property of the Church was aimed at, declared that the bishops could relinquish nothing without the permission of the Holy See; whereupon Gustavus, altogether losing patience, delivered himself of a passionate harangue, reproaching the Estates bitterly for their ingratitude and inertia, and concluding with these words:—"Ye have chosen me to be your king, but who would be your king under such conditions? Not the worst off in hell! So let me tell you straight out that I will not be your king any longer, and you may choose any good man you like in my place.....Pay me up the value of the clods of earth I have here, and what I have spent of my own

upon the kingdom ; and I promise you that I'll depart, and never, so long as I live, return to this noisome, degenerate, and ungrateful land." With that he burst into tears and rushed from the room.

After three days of the utmost confusion and dismay, the Estate of Peasants, in the complete absence of anything like counsel and guidance from their natural leaders, manfully took the initiative and compelled Laurentius Andreæ and Olavus Petri to go up to the castle and implore the king to return. This of itself was an unconditional surrender ; but Gustavus was determined to make his subjects feel to the uttermost how indispensable he was to them. Not till the Estates had sent message after message to him, begging him, "for God's sake," to come back to them, did he relent. When at last, on the fourth day, he reappeared, it was as much as the Estates could do to abstain from falling down and kissing his feet. All his demands were instantly and unanimously granted, and embodied in the notable document known as the Vesterås Recess. Paragraph 2 of this document provides that the surplus revenues of the bishops, cathedral chapters, and land-owning monasteries, should be transferred to the Crown, which was also provisionally to take over the bishops' palaces and castles. Paragraph 3 authorised the nobility to redeem from the religious houses all the land devoted to pious uses since 1454, upon which they could make good their claims. The Church's relations to the State were still further defined and explained by the Vesterås ordinance. Bishops and other prelates were never henceforth to apply to Rome for confirmation ; Peter's pence were henceforth to go to the Crown instead of to the Pope ; ecclesiastics in temporal matters were to be amenable to the civil courts alone. Yet the changes made by the Riksdag of Vesterås were mainly economical and administrative. There was no modification of Church doctrine, for the general resolution that God's Word should be preached plainly and purely was not contrary to the teaching of the ante-Tridentine Church.

Immediately after the departure of the king from Vesterås, Hans Brask quitted Sweden, to pass the remainder of his days at the Polish monastery of Landa, where he died in 1539. The disappearance of the last effective champion of the old faith was a relief and an assistance to the Reformers. From the new bishops, nothing, apparently, was to be feared. In the beginning of January, 1528, they allowed themselves to be consecrated, without the papal confirmation, by Per Måansson, bishop of Vesterås, who, although he had been consecrated by the Pope before his return to Sweden, now submitted, against his convictions, to the royal will. The recess of Vesterås was confirmed and extended by the synod of Örebro, which was summoned, in February, 1529, for "the better regulation of Church ceremonies and discipline according to God's Word." It provided for the preaching of the new doctrines, declared the Holy Scriptures to be the sole norm of doctrine, and placed the religious orders under the jurisdiction of the bishops. But even now there was no formal protest against Rome; and the old ritual was retained unaltered, though it was to be explained as symbolical.

Three months after the synod of Örebro, a rising occurred which showed how unpopular the Reformation was in the country at large. It began with the murder, by peasants in Småland, of one of the king's bailiffs who had seized the monastery of Nydala. The rebels were encouraged by some of the most eminent men in Sweden, notably by Senators Ture Jönsson, Hölger Carlsson, and Magnus Haraldsson, bishop of Skara, who openly protested against the Vesterås recess, and aimed at nothing less than deposing the king. Gustavus was much disquieted. "I fear," he wrote, "that this treason is so great and widespread that we may not know whereto to betake us." Yet within a month his prudent measures had averted the danger. The peasants were pacified by a compromise made at Broddetorp April 25, 1529, but never kept; the bishop and the senators fled first to Denmark and then

to Christian II in the Netherlands; and a Riksdag held at Strengnäs, June 17, reconfirmed the Vesterås recess, and condemned two of the Småland ringleaders to death.

Henceforth the work of the Reformation continued uninterruptedly, if gradually. In 1531 a Swedish missal was published authorising communion in both kinds. The same year an assembly of bishops and prelates elected Laurentius Petri, the brother of Olavus, hitherto a professor at Upsala, the first Lutheran primate of Sweden. Subsequently matters were much complicated by the absolutist tendencies of Gustavus, which, in his later years, passed all bounds. His arbitrary appropriation of the Church's share of the tithes from and after 1539, and his sequestration of the Church's movable property during the same year, drew protests even from his own archbishop and bishops, who rightly regarded these acts as violations of the Vesterås recess. Gustavus at first retorted only with insults and menaces. Then he took offence at certain references in the sermons of Olavus Petri to blasphemy and swearing, which he regarded as personal allusions; he certainly had the ugly habit of emphasising his speech with oaths. Olavus Petri made matters worse by openly calling Gustavus a tyrant and a skinflint, and by hanging up in the cathedral pictures of recent *parkelia*, which he explained as portents of calamities that the king's sins would bring upon the land. At last Gustavus's rage burst forth; and both Olavus Petri and Laurentius Andreæ were arraigned before an extraordinary tribunal, largely composed of foreigners, on a mysterious and unconvincing charge of hiding their knowledge of a conspiracy against the king's life. This arraignment has all the appearance of a vindictive afterthought; yet nevertheless both Andreæ and Petri were on January 2, 1540, actually condemned to death, though the sentences were commuted to ruinous fines. Gustavus had already (1539) appointed a German, Georg Norman, "superintendent and ordinator" over all the bishops and prelates, with plenipotentiary powers. At

a subsequent Riksdag held at Vesterås in 1544 the last shreds of Roman Catholicism were swept away. Even now no definite confession of faith was formulated; but the rupture with Rome had become so complete, in view of Gustavus's uncompromising attitude, that Sweden received no invitation to the Council of Trent, then in session. By the ordinances of 1539 and 1540 Gustavus had already so curtailed the power of the bishops that they had little of the dignity left but the name; and even that he was now disposed to abolish. The bishops appointed after 1543 were called by him ordinaries or superintendents, never bishops; and they were appointed directly by the Crown without even any previous pretence of an election by the cathedral chapters as hitherto.

Thus the Reformation in Sweden was practically the work of one overwhelmingly strong man acting contrary to the religious instincts of the nation for the good of the State. In the nature of things it could not be so thorough as it was in Denmark, where the people were less independent, and exposed directly to German influences. There could be no question of a return of Denmark to Rome after the Copenhagen recess of 1536; but in Sweden, even after the Riksdag of Vesterås in 1544, a Catholic reaction was always a possibility. That which subsequently took place, under pressure from without, was an event of some political importance, though Gustavus Vasa had done his work so well that it failed to shake the foundations of the new national Church.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SONS OF GUSTAVUS VASA, 1560—1611.

GUSTAVUS VASA left four sons, Eric, now in his twenty-seventh year, the only child of his first wife and his appointed successor, and John, Magnus, and Charles, the children of his second wife. Of these younger sons, John, created duke of Finland and governor of that province during his father's lifetime, was twenty-three; Magnus, duke of Östergötland, five years John's junior, grew up insane and was never of much account; while Charles, duke of Södermanland, was still a boy.

The news of his father's death reached Eric as he was on the point of embarking for England, to press in person his suit for the hand of Queen Elizabeth. He hastened back to Stockholm after burying his father, summoned a Riksdag which met at Arboga, April 13, 1561, and adopted the royal propositions known as the Arboga articles, April 14, considerably curtailing the authority of the royal dukes in their respective duchies. Two months later Eric XIV was crowned at Upsala with unprecedented pomp and splendour, on which occasion he first introduced the titles of baron and count into Sweden, by way of adding to the splendour of his court, and attaching to the Crown the higher nobility, these new counts and barons receiving lucrative fiefs adequate to the maintenance of their new dignities.

King Eric XIV has gone down to posterity as a monster whose misdeeds are barely excusable on the plea of insanity ; yet there can be no doubt that he exercised a singular charm over his contemporaries. The French ambassador, Charles de Dançay, who knew Eric personally, describes him as a very handsome, well-framed prince, marvellously accomplished, speaking German, French, and Latin as well as his mother tongue, a great mathematician and a very good musician. He also credits him with an alert and critical intelligence, a rare power of diagnosing character, and a laudable capacity for taking pains. Eric's own father, a difficult master to please, also had a high opinion of his son's judgment, and profitably consulted him on affairs of state. His first act as a ruler, the limitation of the excessive authority of the royal dukes, whatever its motives, was undoubtedly a wise one. To an immature, struggling state like Sweden, a strongly centralised government was then indispensable. Equally laudable were his efforts to promote good government by keeping a stringent watch on his governors and lord-lieutenants, lest they should overstep their powers ; by establishing a high tribunal, *Konungens Nämd*, as the organ and definite representative of the Crown ; by the revival of the old practice of sending the judges on circuit at regular intervals ; and by the substitution of a regular course of administrative procedure for the more cumbrous system of purely personal government.

Unfortunately in company with these fine qualities were to be found dangerous vices, "childish, womanish emotions," as his anxious, far-seeing father used to call them. Yet Eric's vices were but his father's foibles released from the dominion of a mastering will, and exaggerated by vanity, licentiousness, and cowardice. Gustavus had been stern, violent and suspicious ; Eric was cruel and homicidal, feared all men and trusted few. From the very beginning of his reign his morbid suspicion of the upper classes, from "faithless redbeard," as he called his half-brother John, downwards, drove him to give

his absolute confidence to a man of base origin and bad character, though, it must be admitted, of superior ability. This was Göran Persson, the son of a priest who had been one of the first to contract the still illegal tie of wedlock under the protection of the Reformers. Born about 1530, Göran was sent to Germany to complete his studies, returned home with a certificate from Melanchthon, and obtained a post at court, where he behaved so badly that he was condemned to death, though the sentence was subsequently commuted to perpetual banishment. Instead of leaving the country, however, he sought refuge with Duke Eric, who took him into his service despite the warnings of his father. On succeeding to the throne, Eric made Göran his procurator and secretary; and from henceforth the priest's son became the king's acknowledged favourite and indispensable counsellor. It was at his suggestion that the tribunal known as *Konungens Nämnd* was instituted, a useful and necessary reform in itself, but frequently employed by Göran, who officiated therein as public prosecutor, as a sort of court of Star Chamber for capitally punishing or heavily fining scores of so-called political offenders cited by him before it. This powerful upstart was the natural enemy of the nobility, who suffered much at his hands, though it is very difficult to determine whether the initiative in these prosecutions proceeded from him or his master. Göran was also a determined opponent of Duke John, in whom, from the first, he recognised his master's most dangerous rival. Ever since the Riksdag of Arboga the brothers had been on unfriendly terms. Only with the utmost repugnance had John subscribed the articles of Arboga; and it was his practical infringement of them which now brought an open rupture between the king and the duke. The immediate occasion of John's offence was his independent action in regard to the Livonian question.

At the time of Gustavus Vasa's death there were two Livonian deputations in Sweden, one from the Master of the Sword Order, Gotthard von Kettler, soliciting Sweden's media-

tion in the war with Russia; the other from the Protestant city of Reval which, threatened at the same time by Russia, Poland, and the duke Magnus of Denmark, begged for pecuniary assistance from the Swedish king. Kettler's demands were rejected by Eric XIV as exorbitant, whereupon the Master submitted himself to Poland (Treaty of Wilna, Nov. 28, 1561). Courland and Semigallia, the ancient lands of the now extinct order, became a Polish fief with Kettler as its first temporal duke; and he was at the same time appointed governor of Livonia. This arrangement brought Sweden and Poland into direct collision in the Baltic provinces; for, in March, 1561, Reval, driven to extremities, had voluntarily placed itself beneath the protection of the Swedish Crown. John, as duke of Finland, had hoped to obtain a share of the spoil of the ancient Order, but, finding himself disappointed in his expectations, he gladly listened, in July, 1561, to a proposal from Sigismund I of Poland that he should wed that monarch's younger sister Catherine. Eric, clearly foreseeing the dangerous consequences of such a union for Sweden, forbade his brother to proceed with it, and, at the same time, commanded Klas Horn, the governor of Reval, to attack and take Pernau, one of the newly acquired possessions of Poland in Livonia, naturally supposing that his brother would now, as a matter of course, cease all negotiations with a belligerent power. Instead of that, John immediately set sail for Dantzic, was married to Catherine Jagellonika at Wilna, on October 4, 1562, and engaged to advance to the Polish king 120,000 dalers in exchange for seven castles situated on the Swedo-Polish frontier.

This unpatriotic act was a flagrant breach of that paragraph of the articles of Arboga which forbade the royal dukes to contract any political treaty without the royal assent; and Eric, suspecting, moreover, from confessions wrung by torture from one of John's servants, that his brother actually meditated rebellion, summoned the duke on April 23,

1563, to appear within three weeks in Sweden, to answer to a charge of treason. The time having elapsed, and John not appearing, Eric called a Riksdag to Stockholm to judge his brother; and the Riksdag, after taking evidence, condemned John (Jan. 7) to death as a traitor, but, at the same time, recommended him to the king's mercy. An army of 10,000 men was incontinently despatched to Finland; but the only resistance met with was at the capital, Åbo, which John himself surrendered after a month's siege. He and his consort, despite solemn promises to the contrary, were thereupon detained in Gripsholm Castle as prisoners of state. That John's quasi-treacherous conduct deserved some punishment there can be little doubt; and public opinion, as represented by the Riksdag and the nobility, supported Eric. If the king had only stopped here, all would have been well; but his suspicions, once aroused, were at the mercy of a morbid imagination; and his imagination suggested that, if his own brother failed him, the loyalty of the great nobles, especially the members of the ancient and illustrious Sture family, his own near kins-folk, could not be depended upon. That the Stures had ever been the most dutiful and pacific subjects of the Vasas counted for nothing in the mind of such a monomaniac. They were, he seems to have argued, after the royal family, the nearest to the throne, and therefore must needs covet it.

The head of the Sture family, at this time, was Senator Count Svante, who had married a sister of Gustavus Vasa's second wife, and had by her a numerous family, of whom two sons, Nils and Eric, still survived. Eric, a mere youth, had been in Duke John's service before he entered that of the king. Nils, now in his twenty-fourth year, had already displayed conspicuous ability both as a diplomatist and a soldier. The dark tragedy known as the Sture murders began with Eric XIV's strange treatment of this young noble. In 1566 Nils Sture was summoned to the royal castle of Svartsjö and received with every mark of favour; yet, on his return to Stockholm, he was

amazed to hear himself and his second brother, Sten, who had died gloriously fighting for his country at the naval battle of Bornholm the year before, publicly proclaimed "traitors, knaves, and scoundrels" in the market-place. Immediately afterwards he received a visit from Göran Persson, who, in the king's name, gave him the choice between "riding into town on a hack with a straw crown on his head," or answering to the charges which Persson, by the king's command, was about to bring against him. Sture at once demanded to be confronted with his accusers. He was brought before the new tribunal, *Konungens Nämnd*, and condemned to death for gross neglect of duty, though not one of the frivolous charges brought against him could be substantiated. The death penalty was commuted into a punishment worse because more shameful than death. On June 15, 1566, the unfortunate youth, bruised and bleeding from shocking ill-treatment, was placed upon a wretched hack, with a crown of straw on his head, and led in derision through the streets of Stockholm. The following night he was seized in his bed and carried off to the fortress of Örbyhus. But forty-eight hours had not elapsed before the command came that Nils was to be brought back to Stockholm; and, a few days later, he was appointed ambassador extraordinary and despatched to Lorraine to resume the negotiations for Eric's marriage with Princess Renata. The king, on this occasion, sent Nils Sture word that what had just befallen him was due to the counsel and machination of wicked men, and at the same time requested him to acknowledge himself rightly condemned and to promise not to seek to avenge himself for "the slight punishment" which the king had mercifully imposed upon him. Nils Sture refused to give any such promise; but King Eric, nevertheless, despatched him forthwith to Lorraine.

Eric XIV must have been well aware that his treatment of Nils Sture was an outrage which the whole nobility of Sweden would resent. Moreover he had offended the aristocracy in

another way. Instead of seeking a bride from among them, as his father had twice done, he married, about this time, the daughter of a common soldier, Karin, or Kitty, Månsdotter. Eric first made the acquaintance of this young and beautiful girl some time between 1561 and 1564. In the beginning of 1565 she was received at court as his mistress, and in 1566 bore him a daughter. The king had already requested both the Riksdag and the Råd to allow him to marry whomsoever he would, since all his matrimonial negotiations with foreign princesses had come to nothing. In this request both the Råd and the Riksdag had acquiesced; but the Råd, consisting as it did of the magnates of Sweden, was naturally more jealous of the royal dignity, and added the proviso that his Majesty should not look lower than the nobility for a consort.

Eric, who had determined to make Karin queen of Sweden, was greatly incensed by the Råd's suggestion, which he regarded as little short of treason. He appears, first of all, to have negotiated with them on the subject. In January, 1567, he extorted from two of the senators, Svante Sture and Sten Eriksson, a declaration to the effect that, inasmuch as certain persons, with the view of extirpating Gustavus Vasa's posterity, had succeeded in thwarting his foreign marriage projects, it was the king's duty to marry whom he would, noble or non-noble; and they engaged to assist him to punish all who should try to prevent his marriage. Simultaneously Göran Persson was busily employed in collecting proofs of a general conspiracy of the higher nobility against the king. A Riksdag was summoned to Upsala, in the middle of May, 1567, to judge between the king and those of the aristocracy whom he regarded as his personal enemies, including Svante Sture and his sons, Per Brahe, Gustaf Olsson Stenbock and his sons Abraham and Eric, Sten Eriksson Lejonhufvud, and half-a-dozen others. Many of these suspects, while on their way to the Riksdag, were invited to visit the king at his castle at Svartsjö. They arrived there in the beginning of May, but

were treated as prisoners instead of as guests. Brought before *Konungens Nämnd*, they were charged with treasonable designs on such flimsy contradictory hearsay evidence that the court ultimately sent them to Upsala for further examination, but not before two of their number had already been condemned to death.

At Upsala the Riksdag had already assembled ; but it was noteworthy that scarce twenty of the nobility were present, and that it consisted almost exclusively of members of the lower Estates. Eric himself arrived on May 16 in a condition of incipient insanity. On the 19th he opened Parliament in a speech which, as he explained, he had to deliver extempore owing to the "treachery" of his secretary. It dealt exclusively with the purely imaginary conspiracy which he believed he had detected at Svartsjö. Two days later, on May 21, Nils Sture arrived at Upsala fresh from his ambassade to Lorraine. He immediately demanded an audience, but was prevented from seeing Eric by Göran Persson, and thrown into prison. On the 22nd he contrived to let the king know the result of his mission, which was favourable to Eric's suit. The same day Eric had a lucid interval. He wrote to Count Svante, Nils's father, a letter of reconciliation, deplored the differences between such near relatives, expressing his utter disbelief of the charges of treason brought against him by their common ill-wishers, and promising him that no harm should befall him and his sons. Count Svante responded in a letter of almost abject gratitude. On the following morning the king paid a visit to Count Svante in his prison, fell down on his knees before him, begged him, for Christ's sake, to forgive him for his unrighteous conduct, and swore incoherently that he would be a gracious sovereign to him for the rest of his days. Svante did his best to pacify the king ; and they parted to all appearance completely reconciled.

It is said that after this interview Eric went for a stroll on the banks of the river Fyris with one of Göran Persson's friends,

and immediately afterwards returned to the castle in an excited condition. Followed by his drabants, he rushed with a drawn dagger into Nils Sture's cell, and greeted him with the words, "So there thou art, thou traitor!" The prisoner, who was lying on his bed with a little prayer-book in his hands, at once fell upon his knees, protesting his innocence and begging for his life; but the king plunged first the dagger and then a dart into his body, and one of the drabants completed the deed on the spot. Eric then ordered that all the prisoners in Upsala Castle, "except Herr Sten," should be killed privately; and the order was at once carried out by Per Gadd, the royal provost-marshall, and a band of half-drunken soldiers, who murdered old Count Sture and his son Eric, with Ivan Ivarsson and Abraham Gustafsson, brother of the queen-dowager. The remaining prisoners, Sten Axelsson and Sten Eriksson, owed their lives to the uncertainty of the executioners as to which of the two was meant by "Herr Sten." These murders were perpetrated so promptly and secretly that it is doubtful whether the Estates, actually in session at the same place, knew what had been done when, on May 26, under violent pressure from Göran Persson, they signed a document declaring that all the accused gentlemen in Svartsjö and Upsala had acted like traitors and confirming all sentences already passed or that might be passed upon them. Thus by threats and violence Persson had at least contrived to cover his master's crimes with the cloak of legality.

Meanwhile Eric, after murdering his old tutor Denis Beurreus, who had attempted to pacify him, wandered, a mere lunatic, in the district between Upsala and Stockholm. He was found, on May 27, in the village of Odensala in peasant's clothes, quite out of his mind, was taken back to Stockholm, and gradually grew calmer and saner. He now attempted to atone, so far as he could, for his misdeeds. The two remaining prisoners were released; negotiations were opened with the relatives of the murdered men; and, when they had agreed to

condone what had been done, Eric, on July 18, 1567, wrote a letter to Nils Sture's mother, Märta Eriksdotter, explaining that her son had been overhastily despatched, that he, the king, was much displeased "that the slight difference between them should have been treated in this way," and proposing "a Christian reconciliation" between himself and Dame Märta's family. That Dame Märta, whose masculine force of character had earned her the title of King Märta, should even have consented to negotiate at all with the assassin of her husband and children is not the least amazing part of this amazing affair. She consented to be appeased, however, only on certain conditions, one of which was that the "venomous persons" who had advised the misdeed should be punished. To this Eric consented; and Göran Persson, in the course of 1567, was arrested, tried for peculation and perjury and condemned to death, but kept in prison pending the king's recovery.

During the greater part of 1567 Eric was so deranged that a committee of senators was appointed to govern the kingdom. One of his illusions was that he was not king, but his brother John, whom he now set at liberty. When, at the beginning of 1568, Eric recovered his reason, a reconciliation was effected between the king and the duke, on condition that John should recognise the legality of his brother's marriage with Karin Månsdotter, and her children as the successors to the Crown. A few weeks later Eric, by the advice of Göran Persson, who was presently released and accompanied his master, joined the army in the field, and returned to his capital apparently restored to health. A month afterwards, on July 4, he was solemnly married to Karin Månsdotter at Stockholm, by the primate, old Laurentius Petri. The next day Karin was crowned queen of Sweden, and her infant son, Gustavus, proclaimed heir to the throne; but none of the royal dukes and very few of the nobility were present on the occasion. Shortly after his marriage Eric issued a circular ordering a general thanksgiving for his delivery from the assaults of the

Devil. This document, in every line of which madness is legible, convinced most thinking people that Eric was unfit to reign. The royal dukes, John and Charles, had already taken measures to depose him; and in July the rebellion broke out in Östergötland. Eric at first offered a stout resistance, and won two victories; but on September 17 the dukes stood before Stockholm, and Eric, after surrendering Göran Persson to the horrible vengeance of his enemies, himself submitted and resigned the crown. On September 30, 1578, John III was proclaimed king by the army and the nobility; and a Riksdag, summoned to Stockholm, confirmed the choice and formally deposed Eric on January 25, 1569.

For the next seven years the ex-king was a source of the utmost anxiety to the new government. No fewer than three rebellions, with the object of releasing and reinstating him, had to be suppressed, and his prison was changed half-a-dozen times; even in Finland he was considered a danger. So early as September 13, 1569, King John had induced the archbishop and bishops to issue an opinion which declared that in the event of a rising in Eric's favour his life ought not to be spared. On March 10, 1575, an assembly consisting of the Råd, the bishops, and some of the leading men among the clergy of Stockholm, went a step further, and, at John's request, pronounced a formal sentence of death upon the deposed monarch. Two years later, on February 24, 1577, Eric died suddenly in his prison at Örbyhus. It is generally believed that he was poisoned by his new governor, Johan Henriksson, a man of notoriously infamous character and the secretary and intimate of King John, who had placed him in charge of his unfortunate brother at the beginning of the month. Eric's son Gustavus, expelled from Sweden by his jealous uncle, became a homeless wanderer, embraced the Catholic faith, and died, in 1607, at Kashin in Central Russia.

We have seen that the same Riksdag which deposed Eric

recognised John as his successor. On the same occasion Duke Charles acknowledged his brother as sovereign lord and king, and Duke Sigismund, his brother's son, as the lawful heir to the throne; whilst John confirmed the donation of the duchy of Södermanland to Charles, and recognised his brother's right of succession to the Swedish throne in case of the extinction of his own posterity.

The twenty-four years of John III's reign coincide with the beginnings of two great political movements—Sweden's territorial expansion and the Catholic reaction.

From the moment when Sweden got a firm footing in Esthonia by the acquisition of Reval she was forced to adopt a policy of combat and aggrandisement. To retreat would have meant the ruin of her Baltic trade, upon which the national prosperity so much depended. Her next-door neighbours, Poland and Russia, were necessarily her competitors; fortunately they were also each other's rivals; obviously her best policy was to counterpoise them. To accomplish this effectually she required to have her hands free; and the composition of the long outstanding differences with Denmark by the Treaty of Stettin (p. 83), was therefore a judicious act on the part of King John and his ministers. Equally judicious was the anti-Russian league with Poland, concluded in 1578. The war between Russia and Sweden for the possession of Livonia, resumed in 1571, had, on the whole, been disadvantageous to the Swedes. In January, 1573, the Russians captured Weissenstein; in July, 1575, Pernau and Hapsal; in 1576 Leal and Lode; and, in the beginning of 1577, a countless Moscovite host began the siege of Reval, the last Swedish stronghold in Esthonia. Hitherto Poland's attitude towards the belligerents had been hesitating and ambiguous; but when, in the course of 1576, Stephen Báthory, prince of Transylvania, was elected king of Poland, that great statesman immediately recognised the necessity of the Swedish alliance; and Swedes and Poles, acting in concert against the common

foe, defeated the Russians at Wenden (October, 1578). While Stephen thereafter pursued his career of conquest into the very heart of Moscovy, the Swedes not only recovered most of the ground they had lost in Estonia, but made fresh conquests in Carelia, Ingria, and Livonia, which culminated in the capture of Narva (September 6, 1581) and other less important fortresses.

The conclusion of a ten years' truce between Stephen and Ivan the Terrible, through the mediation of the papal legate Antonio Possevino, January 15, 1582, led to a further truce of three years between Sweden and Russia made at Pliusa, August 5, 1582, on a *uti possidetis* basis. Three years later the death of Stephen Báthory led to a still closer union between Sweden and Poland. The numerous competitors for the vacant throne included four Austrian archdukes, the new Russian Tsar Theodore, Andrew Báthory, and Duke Sigismund, King John's eldest son. After an interregnum of eight months Sigismund was elected, August 19, 1587, chiefly through the efforts of the great Polish chancellor, Andrew Zamoyski, and his own mother, Queen Catherine, after promising to maintain a fleet upon the Baltic, to build sundry fortresses in the border provinces against the Tatars, and not to visit Sweden without the consent of the Polish Sejm or Diet. Sixteen days later the Articles of Kalmar, signed by both monarchs, regulated the future relations between the two countries when, in process of time, Sigismund should succeed his father as king of Sweden. The two kingdoms were to be perpetually allied, but each of them was to retain its own laws and customs. Sweden was also to enjoy her religion, subject to such changes as a General Council might make; but neither Pope nor Council was to claim or exercise the right to release Sigismund from his obligations to his Swedish subjects. During Sigismund's absence from Sweden that realm was to be ruled by seven Swedes, six elected by the king and one by Duke Charles. No new tax was to be levied in Sweden during the king's absence; and Sweden was not to be administered from Poland.

Any necessary alterations in these articles were only to be made with the common consent of the king, Duke Charles, the Riksråd, and the gentry of Sweden.

A week after subscribing these articles young Sigismund departed to take possession of the Polish throne. He was expressly commanded by his father to return to Sweden if the Polish deputation, awaiting him at Dantzig, should insist on the cession of Esthonia to Poland as a condition precedent to the act of homage. The Poles proved even more difficult to satisfy than had been anticipated ; but finally a compromise was come to whereby the territorial settlement was postponed till the death of John III; and Sigismund was duly crowned at Cracow on December 27, 1587.

The earnest endeavour of the Swedish statesmen to bind the hands of their future king was due to their fear of the rising flood of the Catholic reaction, which had begun to set in throughout Europe, and was soon to beat against the shores of distant Sweden. Till the beginning of 1560 Protestantism had everywhere been a conquering power. In Germany, with two exceptions, the leading secular princes professed allegiance to the Evangelical Confession. Of the six archbishops, two, of the twenty bishops, twelve, were Protestants. Calvinism had invaded and established itself in France; England was more Protestant than Catholic ; in Scandinavia the new doctrines everywhere prevailed. Poland was vacillating, Bohemia schismatical, Austria indifferent. The ultimate universal victory of Protestantism appeared imminent and inevitable. But now a portent revealed itself. The ancient Church, suddenly recovering herself, displayed a vigour and a power of cohesion as unexpected as it was imposing. Shaken to her very base, far more by internal corruptions than by external assaults, she sagaciously recognised the necessity of self-correction, and emerged from the Council of Trent a new and living force inspired by an invincible belief in her divine proselytising mission. Everywhere she found Protestantism, after a brief existence of

barely half a century, already in the throes of dissolution. In England Episcopalians and Presbyterians, in Holland Arminians and Gomarists, in Germany Lutherans and Calvinists, were flying at each others' throats. And, before these fiercely contending parties were well aware of it, more than half the ground wrested by them from their ancient enemy had been recovered; and France, Austria, and Poland, with southern and central Germany, returned to their allegiance to the Holy See.

The northern lands were more difficult to recover, not so much from any racial peculiarity as from geographical aloofness and purely political circumstances. Under Eric XIV the Reformation in Sweden had proceeded on much the same lines as during the reign of his father, quietly, unobtrusively, retaining all the old Catholic customs not flagrantly contrary to the Scriptures. Naturally, after 1544, when the Council of Trent had formally declared the Bible and tradition to be equally authoritative sources of all Christian doctrine, the contrast between the old and the new teaching became more generally obvious; and in many countries a middle party arose which aimed at a compromise between extremes by going back to the Church of the Fathers. One of the foremost spokesmen of this movement was the distinguished Dutch theologian, George Cassander, whose views largely influenced King John III. John was by far the most learned of the Vasas. He had a taste for philosophical speculation, had made a special study of patristic literature, and was therefore entitled to have an opinion of his own in theological matters. His beloved consort, too, was a Catholic, a circumstance which predisposed him to judge equitably between the two Confessions. As soon as he had mounted the throne he took measures to bring the Swedish Church back to "the primitive Apostolic Church and the Catholic faith," and, in 1574, persuaded a synod assembled at Stockholm to adopt certain articles framed by himself on what we should call a High Church basis. Moreover, on the death of Laurentius Petri in 1573, he passed over the violent

Protestant, Martinus Olai, bishop of Linköping, and bestowed the primacy on another Laurentius Petri, an ecclesiastic of learning and moderation. In February, 1575, a new Church ordinance, drawn up by the king and his secretary, Petrus Fecht, was presented to another synod held at Stockholm, and accepted thereat, but very unwillingly. This ordinance was a further approximation to the ancient patristic Church, although formally protesting against auricular confession and communion in one kind. In 1576 a new liturgy or prayer-book was issued by the king, on the model of the Roman missal but with considerable modifications. To a modern high Anglican it would seem an innocent manual enough; but the extreme Protestants in Sweden, headed by Duke Charles, who, in matters of religion, was somewhat fanatical, at once took the alarm. The duke refused to allow the new prayer-book to be used in his duchy; and in Stockholm and Upsala some of the clergy and professors openly preached against it. That much of this opposition was purely factitious is plain from the readiness with which the Riksdag, assembled at Stockholm early in 1577, adopted the new liturgy, only the extreme Protestant section of the clergy insisting that, if adopted at all, it should be interpreted in a natural and obvious sense.

The adoption of the ordinance of 1575 and the liturgy of 1576 greatly encouraged the Catholic party in Europe. They regarded these measures as steps in the right direction; and the celebrated Polish prelate, Cardinal Hosius, who was in constant communication with the zealous and devout Queen Catherine, wrote a letter of congratulation to the king. A clever Norwegian Jesuit, Laurentius Nicolai, popularly known as Klosterbasse, was then despatched to Stockholm, and soon gained such an influence over John by his spirited defence of the new liturgy, that the king was at last persuaded to send an embassy to Rome, to open negotiations for the reunion of the Swedish Church with the Holy See. The Curia now entertained the highest hopes of reestablishing the dominion of Rome in

Scandinavia ; and, in order to remove the last scruples of King John, the Pope sent one of his ablest diplomatists, the Jesuit Antonio Possevino, to Stockholm. He arrived in December, 1577, and, after six months of almost incessant argument with the royal disputant, prevailed upon John to make his confession to him, receive absolution, and communicate according to the Roman Catholic rite.

This is what has overhastily been called King John's conversion to Catholicism : in reality it was only a first step in that direction. John consented to embrace Catholicism only under certain conditions ; and those conditions were never fulfilled. He had insisted throughout that there could be no reunion of the Swedish Church with Rome, unless Rome conceded communion in both kinds, a married clergy, the use of the vernacular in the celebration of mass, and the disuse of holy water, invocations of the saints, and prayers for the dead. These conditions were duly forwarded to Rome by Possevino ; and, in October, 1578, the Pope's answer was received, rejecting them altogether. John was the more displeased at the collapse of his ecclesiastical policy as his negotiations with Rome had imperilled the popularity of his new liturgy, of which he was pedantically proud. Yet his relations with the Holy See were not broken off ; and Possevino, during a second visit to Sweden (July, 1579-1580) did what he could for the future of Catholicism in the north by persuading the king to send young Swedes to be educated at the Jesuit seminaries at Braunsberg and Olmütz ; by making the monastery of Vadstena, which had survived the Reformation, a propagandist centre ; and by circulating broadcast translations of the catechism of the Jesuit Canisius. The only important result, however, of this first assault of the Catholic reaction upon Sweden was the formal conversion of the Crown-Prince Sigismund to the Roman faith.

Disappointed in his hopes of a reunion with Rome, John redoubled his efforts to impose the new liturgy on the Swedish nation. Tithes were forbidden to be paid to those priests who

refused to use it; and the few prelates who wrote and preached against it were deposed or imprisoned. The malcontents sought a refuge with Duke Charles in Södermanland, where he enjoyed almost absolute sovereignty; and from henceforth he became the centre of the opposition to the new liturgy, and indeed to everything distantly resembling crypto-Catholicism. But the duke and his Protestant friends were a mere minority. The Stockholm Riksdag of 1582 decreed that the new liturgy was to be used by all congregations in the realm without exception; while the temporal Estates steadily set their faces against the political usurpations of Duke Charles, and, in the most emphatic terms, subordinated his jurisdiction to the paramount authority of the Crown. The relations between the king and the duke grew still more strained when Charles ostentatiously absented himself from the wedding of his brother with Gunilla Bjelke in February, 1585¹; and when, in the following year, in direct violation of the statute of 1582, he proceeded to appoint Petrus Jonae, whom the king abhorred, bishop of Strengnäs. For a moment a civil war seemed inevitable; but at the Vadstena Riksdag of 1587 a compromise was arrived at, favourable, on the whole, to the royal claims. Towards the close of his reign King John's suspicions of the Riksråd led to a complete reconciliation with his brother, which was publicly confirmed at the Stockholm Riksdag of 1590. On this occasion the Estates consented to a new law of succession, whereby heirs female were to succeed to the throne on the failure of heirs male; while, in case of a minority, the regency was to be vested in the sovereign's nearest and eldest relations. Two and a half years later (November 17, 1592) John III died. Swedish historians have been as unfair to him as our own Whig historians have been to Charles I. Yet John III's ecclesiastical policy was a well-meant *via media* between two bitterly antagonistic extremes; and he displayed an admirable self-restraint in the teeth of

¹ Queen Catherine had died fourteen months before.

irritating and semi-treasonable opposition. His foreign policy, moreover, was judicious, and by no means unsuccessful.

Immediately after King John's death Duke Charles hastened to Stockholm, and, together with the Råd, provisionally undertook the government till the arrival of King Sigismund from Poland. Both the duke and the Senate agreed in wishing to preserve "the true Christian religion according to the Augsburg Confession," well aware that the Catholic reaction in Europe placed high hopes on the proselytising tendencies of the new Catholic king. Naturally, therefore, their first measure was to summon a synod for the regulation of doctrine and ritual. The synod assembled at Upsala on February 25, 1593, and was attended by no fewer than 340 prelates and priests. Its spirit may be gauged from the choice of its president, Nicolaus Olai, a comparatively young man, who had been imprisoned by the late king for his opposition to the new liturgy. On March 5 the synod agreed upon its confession of faith. Holy Scripture and the three primitive creeds were to be the rules of Christian faith; but the Augsburg Confession was solely to be taken as rightly interpreting the meaning of Scripture. On the following day King John's liturgy was rejected, and the old mass-book, with certain alterations, readopted. On March 14 the three vacant sees were filled by zealous Lutherans; the new primate, Abraham Angermannus, in particular, had been a determined adversary of the Johannine *via media*.

That the new king should regard the summoning of the synod of Upsala without his previous knowledge and consent as an infringement of his prerogative was only natural, especially as its decrees were obviously directed against himself. We cannot therefore be surprised that he refused to give a written confirmation of the Upsala decrees. The Protestant party had intended to prevent Sigismund from crossing to Sweden by keeping back the fleet till he had given them the most satisfactory assurances on the head of religion; but this design

was frustrated by the loyalty of Klas Fleming, the governor of Finland, who, in defiance of Duke Charles's express prohibition, placed his division of the fleet at the service of Sigismund, who arrived at Stockholm on September 30, 1593. He was accompanied by the papal legate, Germanicus de Malaspina, three Jesuits, several Catholic priests, and a large and imposing Polish retinue. A few days after his arrival the duke and the Råd again demanded an assurance that he would respect the religious liberties of his Swedish subjects. Sigismund promised to give such assurance after his coronation; the duke and the Råd insisted upon having it before that ceremony. The unseemly wrangle continued for the next four months; and it was only when the coronation Riksdag, on February 16, 1594, formed a religious union for the maintenance of the pure evangelical religion and the Upsala decrees, and the duke, who now had an army behind him, demanded a satisfactory reply within four-and-twenty hours, that Sigismund finally gave way. On the same day he declared his approval of the demands of the Estates, and recognised Abraham Angermannus as primate.

On February 19 Sigismund was crowned at Upsala; on which occasion he swore to maintain the Augsburg Confession in Sweden, to employ no person in affairs of state who did not belong to the state religion, and faithfully to observe all the ancient laws and liberties of Sweden. Then, after he had been invested with the regalia, Duke Charles, the Råd and the nobility, swore fealty to him in the cathedral, while the lower Estates did homage in the public square. One striking fact indicates what progress religious intolerance had made since the days of King John: the Estates now refused to allow the Catholics liberty of worship; and Sigismund, in default of a church, was obliged to hire a large house in Stockholm where mass, according to the Roman rite, was celebrated by a Swedish Jesuit. No wonder that the bitterness between the two religious parties, in these circumstances, grew

day by day. While in the court chapel at Drottningholm Jesuit preachers thundered against the errors of Luther, the inflammatory sermons of the Protestant pastor, Eric Skippare, stirred up the populace of Stockholm; and collisions between Poles and Swedes, in the streets of the capital, became more and more frequent. It was with a feeling of relief that the more moderate men saw Sigismund depart for Poland on July 14, 1594, leaving the duke and the Råd to rule Sweden in his absence.

The principal act of the new government was the conclusion of the Russian war, which had been raging intermittently since 1590. The ambassadors of both powers met together at a peace congress at Teusin on the river Narva; and peace was signed on May 18, 1595. By the Peace of Teusin Russia recognised the right of Sweden to Estonia and Narva, while Sweden retroceded the province of Kexholm in Finland to Russia.

But now the restless ambition of Duke Charles led to fresh complications. Charles was dissatisfied with the powers conferred on him by his nephew. He had demanded, and been refused, the title of regent; and, in the course of 1595, contrary to the express command of the king, he persuaded the Råd to summon an extraordinary Riksdag to Söderköping for the purpose, as he wrote to Sigismund, of giving Sweden a more stable and regular government in view of the indefinite absence of the sovereign. The Riksdag met on September 30, 1595; and on October 7 the duke asked their opinion as to how the government might best be carried on during Sigismund's residence in Poland. Other questions relating to religious matters were subsequently submitted to the Estates. The Riksdag responded with the decree of October 22, 1595, which was issued jointly by the Råd and the Estates. By this statute the duke was formally declared regent; but he was to act conjointly with the Råd. The same statute has the mournful distinction of initiating religious persecution in

Sweden. All the Catholic congregations, hitherto tolerated without question, were henceforth to be abolished ; all Catholic priests were to leave the country within six weeks ; Catholic laymen might reside in the realm, but were disqualified from holding official appointments. In December, 1595, the duke proceeded to the great convent of Vadstena, which had done so much for the religious and moral welfare of Sweden, expelled the nuns without warning, and confiscated their property. His agents naturally exceeded their master in brutality. Charles had empowered the archbishop and bishops to conduct a general visitation of the realm ; and the new primate, by way of carrying out the ducal commands, proceeded to use his pastoral staff as if it were a bludgeon. In the course of his "visitation" we hear of men flogged till they bled, of women and children ducked and soused, and of Christian worshippers, whose only fault was a natural love of the familiar and beautiful Catholic ritual, "worried and hustled." Even the duke, merciless as he was to everything Catholic, was obliged to intervene and remind Dr Abraham Angermannus that he was not a public executioner but an archbishop ; while the visitations were provisionally suspended.

As for the men whom King Sigismund had left behind him to rule the provinces, the duke treated them as public enemies, driving them from their offices and expelling them from the realm. The most powerful of them, Klas Fleming, governor of Finland, openly defied him by refusing to recognise the decrees of the Söderköping Riksdag, even before he knew that Sigismund had rejected it, and continuing to hold the Finnish army at the king's disposal. The duke would have made open war upon Fleming ; but the Råd refused to punish the governor of Finland for being more loyal to his sovereign than they were themselves. Technically the duke's procedure was treasonable enough, yet, for all that, it was both statesmanlike and patriotic. The whole position was anomalous. Sigismund was the rightful king of Sweden, yet the political

and religious interests of a Catholic prince who was at the same time king of Poland were absolutely incompatible with the welfare of Sweden. The duke recognised this cardinal fact from the first, and was justified in opposing to the utmost his royal nephew's reactionary policy. As, however, each party was fully convinced of the righteousness of its own cause, it was obvious that only the arbitrament of battle could decide between them.

The struggle began when Sigismund, in the beginning of January, 1597, vested the government in the Råd alone, and forbade the assembling of a Riksdag already summoned by the duke. None the less the Riksdag met at Arboga on February 22, 1597, though, significantly enough, only a single senator, Count Axel Lejonhufvud, appeared there to represent the Råd. With the utmost difficulty (but for the steady support of the peasantry it would have been impossible) Charles succeeded in inducing the Estates to confirm the statutes of the previous Riksdag of Söderköping, conferring the government on him alone. The duke's success was followed by the flight of the senators of the royal party, and the outbreak of a civil war in Finland, which was held for the king by Klas Fleming and his successor Arvid Eriksson Stålarm. At the end of July, 1598, Sigismund himself, with an army of 5000 men, landed at Kalmar. The fortress at once opened its gates to him; the gentry of Småland and Västergötland flocked to his standard; and the capital received him gladly. The Catholic world watched his progress with the most sanguine expectations. Sigismund's success in Sweden was regarded as only the beginning of greater triumphs. Secure of Sweden, he was next to reduce both Denmark and the Hanse towns to the papal obedience; while the port of Elfsborg on the west coast of Sweden was to be ceded to Spain, to serve her as a starting point for a fresh attack upon Protestant England. But it was not to be. After fruitless negotiations with his uncle, Sigismund advanced with his army from Kalmar,

but was defeated by the duke at Stångbro, September 25. Three days afterwards, a compact was made between them at Linköping, whereby Sigismund surrendered the five fugitive senators to the duke, and agreed that the points in dispute between them should be submitted to a Riksdag at Stockholm. Instead, however, of proceeding to Stockholm as arranged, he took ship for Dantzig, after secretly protesting to the two papal proto-notaries who accompanied him that the Linköping agreement had been extorted from him and was therefore invalid.

The duke received the news of the king's flight with the utmost amazement. He was now convinced that the assurances of a prince who thus trifled with his promises were worthless, and that to break with him absolutely was the only safe course to adopt. An assembly of notables held at Jönköping, February 5, 1599, concurred with him, and authorised him, as "hereditary reigning prince," to reduce the fortress of Kalmar and the Grand Duchy of Finland to obedience by force of arms. Kalmar surrendered on May 12; and, on July 24, a Riksdag summoned to Stockholm formally deposed Sigismund as a papist, oath-breaker, and enemy of the realm. His son Wladislaw was, however, to be recognised as king if he were sent to Sweden, within twelve months, to be educated in the national faith. Finland was subdued by the beginning of October, 1599; but Charles's victory was stained by the execution of all the Finnish leaders caught with arms in their hands. Among them was Johan Fleming, the innocent son of the duke's old adversary, Klas Fleming, whose execution can be attributed only to personal vengeance.

On December 14, 1599, Charles summoned the Estates to assemble at Linköping on February 24, 1600. The first act of the Riksdag was to condemn to death the five senators who had been surrendered by Sigismund to Charles at Stångbro; and they were executed in the market-place of Linköping on March 20, the duke remaining inexorable to every petition for mercy. On the previous day a decree of the Riksdag

declared that Sigismund and his posterity had forfeited the Swedish throne, and, passing over Duke John, the second son of John III, a youth of ten, recognised the duke as their sovereign under the title of Charles IX. In case of his death, his son Gustavus Adolphus was to succeed him, with reversion to Duke John in case of the extinction of Gustavus's male line.

Another important measure passed by the Linköping Riksdag, at the suggestion of Charles, was the establishment of a regular army: each district was henceforth to provide and maintain a certain number of infantry and cavalry. This resolution was largely due to the rumours of imminent war which were reaching Sweden from across the Baltic. The power most to be feared was Poland, whose monarch had just been deprived of his Swedish inheritance. The Linköping Riksdag had sent an ultimatum to the Polish Sejm, the only answer to which was the incarceration of the Swedish ambassadors; and Charles prepared at once for the worst. Estonia, where Sigismund had many partisans, was first secured; Karl Horn was appointed stadtholder; and Charles himself, with 9000 men, arrived at Reval on August 9, 1600. Receiving no satisfactory answer from Sigismund's commander in Livonia, Charles invaded that province; and, by March, 1601, the whole country, except Riga and Kokenhausen, was in his possession. At the end of May a Landtag held at Reval resolved upon union with Sweden. But in the beginning of 1602 the tide turned. The loss of Livonia had roused the Polish Diet from its lethargy; and the Grand Hetman, Jan Chodkiewicz, Poland's greatest general, speedily recovered fortress after fortress, and routed the Swedes at Weissenstein, September 15, 1604. In August, 1605, Charles IX, with an army of 16,000 men, again assumed the offensive and advanced against Riga. Chodkiewicz, who had only 5000 men at his disposal, entrenched himself at Kirkholm, two miles south-east of Riga, and was there attacked by the over-confident Swedish

king, who was utterly defeated by the Grand Hetman's superior tactics, with the loss of no fewer than 8000 men.

The defeat of Kirkholm was the more serious as the pretender, known as the first false Demetrius, who was placed on the Moscovite throne by the influence of Poland, in June, 1605, now openly declared himself the enemy of Sweden. But the Swedish Estates liberally supported their king; and Charles prepared to encounter the twofold enemy with indomitable energy. The opportune assassination of Demetrius, May 17, 1606, relieved the Swedish monarch of much anxiety; while the domestic troubles which agitated Poland, after the death of the chancellor Zamoyski, prevented Sigismund from immediately reaping the fruits of the victory of Kirkholm. In June, 1607, the Swedish general, Mansfeld, recovered the fortress of Weissenstein, and, in the following year, captured the Livonian fortresses of Dunemünde, Kokenhausen, and Fellin; but all these places were recovered by Chodkiewicz in the course of 1608 and 1609. Then Russia once again became the centre of gravity of the Swedo-Polish struggle. In 1606 a second false Demetrius, like his predecessor supported by the Poles, had risen against Tsar Vasily Shuisky, defeated him in 1608 at Bolkov, and encamped at Tushino near Moscow.

A well-grounded fear lest "the whole Russian nation should become the thralls of the Polacks" moved Charles IX in the beginning of 1608 to offer Vasily his assistance; and in November of the same year a convention was concluded between Russia and Sweden at Great Novgorod, confirmed by a formal treaty of alliance at Viborg, February 28, 1609. Nine months later a Polish army advanced against Smolensk. It was Sigismund's intention to profit by the anarchy of Moscovy by seizing the Russian crown himself; but Jakob De la Gardie, the Swedish commander, anticipated him by entering Moscow on March 12, 1610. In the beginning of June De la Gardie attempted to relieve Smolensk, which the Poles were still besieging, but was so badly beaten at Klutshino, June 24, 1610, by the Crown

Hetman Zolkiewski, that, to save the remainder of his army, he was forced to abandon Vasily and quit Moscow. The fate of Vasily was now sealed. The victorious Zolkiewski marched against Moscow; Vasily was dethroned; and Sigismund's son Wladislaw was proclaimed Tsar. But a Polish Gosudar was an abomination to the orthodox Moscovites. A few months later a popular rising broke out against Wladislaw; and in the course of 1611 Moscow seemed to be on the verge of dissolution.

In these circumstances Sweden's policy towards Russia was bound to change its character. Hitherto Charles had aimed at supporting the weaker against the stronger Slavonic power; but, now that Moscow seemed about to disappear from among the nations of Europe, Swedish statesmen naturally began to seek some compensation for the expenses of the war before Poland had had time to absorb everything. A beginning was made by the siege and capture of Kexholm in Russian Finland (March 2, 1611); and on July 16 De la Gardie stormed Great Novgorod, and concluded a convention with the magistrates of that wealthy city, whereby Charles IX's son was to be recognised as Tsar of Moscow.

Compared with his foreign policy, the domestic policy of Charles IX was comparatively unimportant. It aimed at confirming and supplementing what had already been done during his regency. Not till March 6, 1604, after Duke John had formally renounced his rights to the crown, did Charles IX begin to style himself king. The first deed in which the title appears is dated March 20, 1604. Two days later the new succession edict appeared, vesting the crown in Charles's male descendants with reversion to Duke John and his heirs male. In the case of the total extinction of the male line, the crown was to be inherited by the eldest unmarried princess. The Estates, at the same time, declared that they would recognise none as king who was of a different religion from themselves. Any heir to the throne who fell away from

"God's pure Word," as represented by the Augsburg Confession, or married a wife professing any false religion, or married without the consent of the Estates, or accepted another kingdom, was thereby to forfeit his rights to the Swedish throne. None belonging to any but the established religion was to hold any office or dignity in Sweden; and every recusant was to be deprived of his estates and banished the realm.

On March 15, 1607, Charles IX was at length crowned king at Upsala. The coronation Riksdag which met on that occasion is memorable for the attempt of the king to reconcile the two great Protestant sects, the Lutherans and the Calvinists. Charles IX was statesman enough to perceive that, if Protestantism were to prevail against the common foe, it must combine its forces. Inclining to Calvinism himself, and with sufficient theological learning skilfully to defend his views, even against such dialecticians as Olaus Martini, the new Lutheran primate, he stoutly opposed the efforts of the Estates to make the ultra-Lutheran decrees of the synod of Upsala the sole rule of faith for the State Church; and, when the Estates, nevertheless, persisted in their intention, he declared, in one of his too frequent outbursts of rage, that he doubted their sincerity in offering him the crown, and would never consent to be their make-shift. Menaced by the threat of abdication, the Estates formally agreed to a compromise. Both the Upsala decrees and the Augsburg Confession were to be cited in the royal coronation oath as the bases of the faith of the Swedish Church; but the concession was robbed of all its value by the addition of the words: "so far as they are grounded upon God's Word and the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures."

Four and a half years after his coronation Charles IX died at Nyköping (October 30, 1611), in the 61st year of his age. As a ruler he is the link between his great father and his still greater son. He consolidated the work of Gustavus

Vasa, the creation of a great Protestant state : he prepared the way for the erection of the Protestant empire of Gustavus Adolphus. Swedish historians have been excusably indulgent to the father of their greatest ruler. Indisputably Charles was cruel, ungenerous, and vindictive ; yet it is impossible not to respect a man who seems, at all hazards, strenuously to have endeavoured to do his duty, as he understood it, during that most difficult of periods, a period of political and religious transition, and who, despite his fanaticism, possessed many of the qualities of a wise and courageous statesman. The Swedish nobility, whom he depressed and persecuted, were no doubt justified in regarding him as a tyrant ; but the Swedish people frankly trusted and cheerfully obeyed a monarch beneath whose protection they felt happy and secure, and who loved his country, in his own rough way, above all else.

CHAPTER VII.

CHRISTIAN IV OF DENMARK, 1588-1648.

THE death of Fréderick II on April 4, 1588, placed Denmark in an altogether unexpected situation. The succession to the throne was indeed assured, for already, in his father's lifetime, Prince Christian had been elected king; but he had not yet completed his eleventh year, and no provision had been made for a regency. Under these circumstances the Rigsraad assumed the government in Christian's name; and on April 15 a circular letter was issued placing the executive authority in the hands of the chancellor, Niels Kaas, the lord high admiral, Peder Munk, and the two senior senators.

The foreign policy of the regents was cautiously expectant. Neutrality at all hazards was its watchword. Its fear of the Spanish Armada, which had induced it to post small observation squadrons off the Norwegian and Danish coasts, passed away with the destruction of the great fleet in 1588; and evasive answers were invariably returned to the suggestions of James VI and Henry IV that Denmark should accede to the Evangelical Union and close the Sound against the Dutch. Especially anxious was the Danish government to avoid irritating Sweden. But great changes were now at hand. On August 17, 1596, the young king, now in his nineteenth year, signed his *Haandfæstning*, or charter, in the presence of the Raad, and thus came into his full rights as king of Denmark. Three years previously, at the Landtag of Flensburg, September 1, 1593, the Estates of

Holstein and Sleswick had acknowledged him as their sovereign duke.

The realm which Christian IV was to govern had undergone great changes within the last generation. To all appearance the Danish state was now more powerful than it had ever been before. The detachment of Sweden had been more than compensated for by the absorption of Norway; and the vast extent of territory, the large increase of population, which Norway brought to the whole monarchy, enabled it for another generation to retain the rank of a great power. Towards the south the boundaries of the Danish state remained unchanged. Levensaa and the Eyder still separated Denmark from the Holy Roman Empire. Sleswick was recognised as a Danish fief in contradistinction to Holstein, which owed vassalage to the Emperor. The "kingdom" stretched as far as Kolding and Skodborg, where the "duchy" began; and this duchy, since its amalgamation with Holstein by means of a common Landtag, and especially since the union of the dual duchy with the kingdom on almost equal terms in 1533, was, in some respects, a semi-independent state. The complicated relations between the kingdom and the duchies were to have far-reaching consequences, and become the source of great danger to the unity of the state in the future.

Denmark moreover, like Europe in general, was politically on the threshold of a transitional period. During the whole course of the sixteenth century the monarchical form of government was in every country, with the single exception of Poland, rising on the ruins of feudalism. The great powers of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were to be the strong, highly centralised, hereditary monarchies, like France, Spain, and Sweden. There seemed to be no reason why Denmark also should not become a powerful state under the guidance of a powerful monarchy, especially as the sister state of Sweden was developing into a great power under apparently identical conditions. Gustavus Vasa, when he reconstituted the realm,

was obstructed by a feudal system of the same sort as the Danish; the changes he effected were very similar to those effected by Christian III; and the royal authority in Sweden was limited and hampered, just as it was in Denmark, by an aristocratic senate. Yet, while Sweden was surely ripening into the dominating power of northern Europe, Denmark had as surely entered upon a period of uninterrupted and apparently incurable declension. What was the cause of this anomaly? Something of course must be allowed for the superior and altogether extraordinary genius of the great sovereigns of the house of Vasa; yet the causes of the collapse of Denmark lay far deeper than this. They may roughly be summed up under two heads: the weakness of an elective monarchy, and the absence of that public spirit which is based on the intimate alliance of ruler and ruled. Whilst Gustavus Vasa had leaned upon the Swedish peasantry, in other words upon the bulk of the Swedish nation, which was, and continued to be, an integral part of the Swedish body-politic, Christian III on his accession had crushed the middle and lower classes in Denmark and reduced them to political insignificance. Yet it was not the king who benefited by this blunder. The Danish monarchy continued to be elective; and an elective monarchy at that stage of the political development of Europe was a mischievous anomaly. It signified in the first place that the Crown was not the highest power in the state, but was subject to the aristocratic Rigsraad. The Rigsraad was the permanent owner of the realm and the crown-lands; the king was only their temporary administrator. If the king died before the election of his successor, the Raad stepped into the king's place; and, even while he was alive, it decided all disputes between him and his subjects. Moreover an elective monarchy implied that at every fresh succession the king was liable to be bound by a new charter. The election itself might, and did, become a mere formality; but the condition-precedent of election, the acceptance of the charter, invariably limiting the royal authority, remained a reality.

Again, the king was the ruler of the realm, but over a very large part of it he had but a slight control. The crown-lands and the towns were under his immediate jurisdiction, and the crown-lands had grown considerably in value since the Reformation; but by the side of the crown-lands lay the estates of the nobility, which already comprised about one-half of the superficial area of Denmark, and were in many respects independent of the central government both as regards taxation and administration. In a word, the monarchy had to share its dominion with the nobility; and the Danish nobility in the sixteenth century was one of the most exclusive and self-seeking aristocracies in Europe. In the Middle Ages the kingdom had been divided into provinces; but now other and far deeper lines of demarcation, parallel lines, the lines of caste distinction, were superseding the old local jealousies. Such a development brought along with it serious political and social perils. And, still worse, the Danish nobility, unlike the Swedish, which, under the genial stimulus of Gustavus Adolphus, became the prolific nursery of a whole series of statesmen and generals; unlike even the Polish nobility, which, under the salutary discipline of disaster, was still capable of producing heroes and regenerators like Koniecpolski and Stephen Czarniecki—the Danish nobility, I say, was already far advanced in decadence. Hermetically sealing itself against any intrusion from below, it deteriorated by close and constant intermarriage; and it was already, both morally and intellectually, below the level of the rest of the nation. It was a bad sign, for instance, that Tycho Brahe, the one aristocrat of genius in Denmark, should be looked down upon by his peers because he had so far freed himself from the privileges of caste as to marry a commoner. Yet this aristocracy, whose claim to consideration was based not upon its own achievements but upon the length of its pedigrees, insisted upon an amplification of its privileges which endangered the economical and political interests of the state and the nation. The time was close at hand when a Danish

magnate was to demonstrate to the world that he preferred the utter ruin of his country to any abatement of his own personal dignity.

All below the king and the nobility were generally classified together as "subjects." Of these lower orders the clergy stood first in the social scale. As a spiritual estate, indeed, it had ceased to exist at the Reformation. Since then, too, it had become quite detached from the nobility, which ostentatiously despised the teaching professions. The clergy recruited itself, therefore, from the class next below it, and looked more and more to the Crown for help and protection as it drew apart from the gentry, who, moreover, as dispensers of patronage, lost no opportunity of appropriating church-lands and cutting down tithes.

The burgesses had not yet recovered from the disasters of "Grevens Fejde"; but, while the towns had become more dependent on the central power, they had at the same time been released from their former vexatious subjection to the local magnates. Within the estate of burgesses itself, too, a levelling process had begun. The old municipal patriciate, which used to form the connecting link between the *bourgeoisie* and the nobility, had disappeared; and a feeling of common civic fellowship had taken its place. All this tended to enlarge the political views of the burgesses as a separate estate, and was not without its influence on the future. Yet, after all, the prospects of the burgesses depended mainly on economical conditions; and in this respect there was a decided improvement, due to the increasing importance of money and commerce all over Europe, especially as the steady decline of the Hanse towns immediately benefited the trade of Denmark-Norway. There can indeed be no doubt that the Danish and Norwegian merchants at the end of the sixteenth century flourished exceedingly, despite the intrusion and competition of the Dutch and the dangers to neutral shipping arising from the frequent wars between England, Spain, and the Netherlands.

At the bottom of the social ladder lay the peasant estate, whose condition had decidedly deteriorated. Only in one respect had it been benefited by the peculiar conditions of the sixteenth century: the rise in the price of corn, without any corresponding rise in the land-tax, must have largely increased its material prosperity. Yet the number of peasant proprietors had diminished, while the obligations of the peasantry generally had increased; and, still worse, their obligations were vexatiously indefinite, varying from year to year and even from month to month. They weighed especially heavily on the so-called *Ugedagsmaend*, who were forced to work two or three days a week on the demesne lands. This increase of villainage, tending as it did to reduce householders to the level of inenials, morally depressed the peasantry, and widened still further the breach between the yeomanry and the gentry. Politically its consequences were disastrous. While in Sweden the free and energetic peasant was a salutary power in the state, which he served with both sword and plough, the Danish peasant was sinking to the level of a bondsman.

Such then was the condition of things in Denmark when Christian IV ascended the throne. Where so much was necessarily uncertain and fluctuating, there was room for an almost infinite variety of development. Much depended on the character and personality of the young prince who had now taken into his hands the reins of government, and for half a century was to guide the destinies of the nation.

Christian IV, on his accession, was nineteen and a half years old. He had developed rapidly. A year before he had seemed a mere child; now he was a man of stately and commanding appearance. He had grown up agile and athletic, always extraordinarily energetic and tenacious. His writing and his sketches testify to a sure hand and a sense of form. Everything decorative and ornamental attracted him. He was a good linguist, speaking, besides his native tongue, German, Latin, French and Italian. Naturally cheerful and hospitable,

he delighted and shone brilliantly in lively society ; but he was also passionate and irritable, with the strong sensual inclinations of a plethoric and life-loving temperament. Yet he was not without the elements of many noble virtues. He possessed unconquerable courage, a vivid sense of duty, an indefatigable love of every sort of work, and all the inquisitive zeal, all the inventive energy, of a born reformer. Want of self-control ruined all these fine qualities. He was of the stuff of which great princes are made, yet he never attained to greatness. His own pleasure, whether it took the form of love or ambition, was always his first consideration. In the heyday of his youth his exuberant high spirits and passion for adventure enabled him to surmount every obstacle with *elan*. But, in the decline of life, the bitter fruits of his lack of stability became miserably obvious; and he sank into the grave a weary and broken-hearted old man.

Christian's marriage had been decided upon during his minority. The bride was Anne Catherine, a daughter of Joachim Frederick, margrave of Brandenburg; and the wedding was celebrated at Haderslevhus on November 27, 1597. The queen died fourteen years later, after bearing Christian six children. The king was speedily and frequently unfaithful to her, but four years after her death he privately wedded a handsome young gentlewoman, Christina Munk, by whom he had no fewer than twelve children. This connexion was disastrous indeed to Denmark.

The early years of the young king were largely devoted to pleasure ; and his court was one of the most joyous and magnificent in Europe. Yet his superabundant energy also found time for work of the most various and comprehensive description. To begin with, a whole series of domestic reforms was originated. The harbours of Copenhagen, Elsinore, and other towns were enlarged; a postal system for the whole of Denmark was established in 1624; many decaying towns were abolished and many new ones founded under more promising conditions,

including Christiania, which grew up in August, 1624, on the ruins of the ancient city of Oslo. Some of these places were to serve as staples and fortresses at the same time, like Glückstadt, built among the marshes of the Elbe to rival Hamburg and defend Holstein. Various attempts were also made to improve trade and industry by abolishing the still remaining privileges of the Hanseatic towns, by promoting a wholesale immigration of skilful and well-to-do Dutch traders and hand-craftsmen into Denmark under most favourable conditions, by opening up the rich fisheries of the Arctic seas, and by establishing joint-stock chartered companies, such as the Danish East India Company with its headquarters at Tranquebar, founded in 1616; the Danish Ceylon Company of 1618, which was to expel the Portuguese from the island; the Icelandic Company of 1619, and the West India Company of 1625; yet most of them ended in failure, due mainly to want of foresight, insufficient capital, and the disasters befalling the Dano-Dutch shipping. Copenhagen especially benefited by Christian IV's commercial policy. He enlarged and embellished it, and provided it with new harbours and fortifications; in short, did his best to make it the worthy capital of a great empire.

On the national defences Christian IV also bestowed much care. Ancient fortresses were repaired and enlarged; new ones were constructed under the direction of Dutch engineers. In the fleet he was still more interested. Some of the new war-ships were built after his own designs; and he had many foreign ship-builders in his employment. Whereas in 1596 the Danish navy had consisted of but twenty-two vessels, in 1610 the number had risen to sixty. The formation of a national army was attended with greater difficulties, inasmuch as both the military capacity and the willingness of the people to contribute towards the maintenance of armaments had sensibly declined since the Middle Ages. This was due to the superior attraction of peaceful pursuits and the progressive costliness of modern warfare. War had everywhere become a technical pursuit;

and the bulk of the army consisted of mercenaries led by professional officers. Christian also was obliged to depend upon hired troops, supported by native levies recruited for the most part from the peasantry on the crown domains, the gentry in this, as in many other respects, exhibiting a disgraceful backwardness.

But it was in the foreign policy of the government that the royal influence was most perceptible. Unlike Sweden, Denmark had remained outside the great religious-political movements which were the outcome of the Catholic reaction ; and the peculiarity of her position made her rather hostile than friendly to the other Protestant states. The possession of the Sound enabled her to close the Baltic against the western powers ; the possession of Norway carried along with it the control of the rich fisheries, which were Danish monopolies and therefore a source of irritation to England and Holland. Denmark, moreover, was above all things a Scandinavian power ; and her interests and her ambition were confined to Scandinavia. While the territorial expansion of Sweden in the near future was a matter of necessity, Denmark had not only attained but exceeded her national limits. Aggrandisement southwards, at the expense of the vast German Empire, was becoming every year more difficult ; and in every other direction she had nothing more to gain. Nay, more, Denmark's possession of the Scania provinces deprived Sweden of her proper geographical frontiers.

Clearly it was Denmark's wisest policy to remain closely allied with Sweden, especially as Sweden's political interests were almost identical with her own. The wisest statesmen of both countries so strongly recognised the necessity of such an alliance that at the Peace Congress of Stettin (1570) an arrangement had been made whereby the two Senates were to meet periodically to compose any differences which might arise between them. But neither Charles IX nor Christian IV was disposed to listen to pacific counsels. Both kings were

ambitious and sensitive; and there were many causes of disagreement between them, chief among which were Sweden's endeavours to secure possession of Lapmark and other districts of northern Norway, and so gain access to the Arctic fisheries. Charles IX's pretensions increased continually. On his coronation he took the title of "King of the Lapps of Nordland"; and the privileges conceded by him to the citizens (mostly Dutch colonists) of the newly founded city of Gothenburg included the right to trade and fish in the disputed districts. But Christian IV also was by no means disposed to be accommodating; and the desire of revenge was bound up with hope of conquest and the lust of glory. Only very reluctantly did the Danish Raad yield to his urgency. In January, 1611, he overbore their opposition by declaring that, if they would not aid him against Sweden, he would wage war on his own account as duke of Sleswick and Holstein. This decided the matter; and on April 4 Christian signed his formal declaration of war.

Christian's plan of campaign was to attack Kalmar, the chief eastern fortress of Sweden, and occupy the southern province of Småland as a first step towards the conquest of the whole of Sweden. He relied as much upon the discontent of the Swedes as upon the valour of his army. The fleet was to co-operate by blockading the Swedish coast and keeping his own communications open. On May 6 he crossed the border with 6000 men, and two days later stood before Kalmar. On May 27 the town was taken and plundered; but the fortress stubbornly held out. On June 11 Charles IX, with a vastly superior force of 12,000 men, hastened to Kalmar. A fortnight later Charles's son, Gustavus Adolphus, then a youth of sixteen, achieved his first feat of arms by capturing and destroying the Scanian fortress of Kristianopel; and on July 7 the Swedish fleet, under Hans Bjelkenstjerna, reprovisioned the fortress. Christian's German generals began to despair; but Christian himself refused to budge, and success rewarded his doggedness.

On July 17 Charles IX attempted to crush him by force of

numbers; and a combined attack was made upon the Danish camp from the Swedish camp and the fortress. The battle raged furiously all day. More than once the fate of the Danes hung upon a hair; but the situation was finally saved by a magnificent charge of the Danish nobility with the young king at their head. The Swedes were finally routed; and the glory of the day belonged indisputably to Christian IV. Four days later the principal Danish fleet arrived. The fortress was now still more closely invested; and on August 4 the new commandant of Kalmar, Krister Some, surrendered it to Christian IV for an estate in Holstein and 1000 dollars. The fall of Kalmar was followed by the voluntary surrender of the adjacent isle of Öland. Success made Christian IV imperious and hard. The entire conquest of Sweden now seemed to him only a matter of time. He dated his letters from "Our castle of Kalmar"; and when Charles IX, deeply moved by the loss of the fortress, sent his youthful rival a challenge to single combat, Christian sarcastically advised him to seek the safe seclusion of a warm fireside. On September 11 Christian returned to Sjælland; and the greater part of his army went into winter quarters. But the campaign was not yet over. In the first week of October Gustavus Adolphus recovered Öland. At the end of the same month Charles IX died at Nyköping Castle. Gustavus Adolphus was proclaimed king of Sweden.

Gustavus Adolphus, with two other wars already on his hands, earnestly desired peace with Denmark. From the first his attitude was conciliatory. He omitted from his title the words "King of the Lapps," and offered terms of peace on the basis of the retrocession of Kalmar. But Christian rejected these overtures; and the beginning of the second campaign was also favourable to the Danes.

On May 13, 1612, Elfsborg, the most important southern fortress of Sweden, was captured; and early in June Öland was retaken. But Christian failed to capture the fortress of Jönköping as a first step towards occupying central Sweden, and returned to

Copenhagen in August. By this time the western powers had grown uneasy at the continuance of a war so mischievous to their trade. In the summer of 1611 the States General had sent plenipotentiaries to Denmark and Sweden to mediate a peace, but without result. When the ambassadors reproached Christian for warring against a fellow-Protestant, he lightly retorted, "non agitur de religione sed de regione." Where the States General failed, James I of England succeeded; but not before the combatants had been convinced of the uselessness of prolonging the struggle. Finally, through the efforts of Robert Anstruther, the plenipotentiaries of both powers met at Knäred in Halland; and there, on January 20, 1613, peace was signed. In all essential points Sweden gave way. She renounced her claims to the isle of Ösel and to Lapmark, conceded to the king of Denmark the right of placing the three crowns in his escutcheon, and engaged to pay one million rix-dollars in six equal instalments, hypothecating in the meantime the fortress of Elfsborg and the towns of Gothenburg, Old and New Lödöse. All other conquests on both sides were to be restored; and Sweden's immunity from the Sound tolls was especially recognised for the first time. Thus Denmark, once more and for the last time, had vindicated her right to be regarded as the greatest Scandinavian power. If Christian IV had not succeeded in subduing Sweden, he had certainly humbled her. The relatively enormous war-indemnity in particular was a most grievous burden. By the time the last instalment of 250,000 rix-dollars had been paid (and Christian IV would accept nothing but ready money), all the Swedish royal silver plate had disappeared in the mint, and the whole country was swept clean of cash.

Yet Denmark derived no essential benefit from "the Kalmar War," which left behind it an intense feeling of hostility between the two kindred people of Scandinavia. Before the Kalmar War there had still been the possibility of a peaceful union; and all classes of both kingdoms had viewed the

outbreak of hostilities with apprehension. But the Elfsborg indemnity filled every Swedish home with bitter hatred of the Danes; perpetual recurring toll and boundary disputes fed this smouldering animosity; and when, in 1617, Gustavus Adolphus acquired Ingria, and the same year conquered Pernau in Livonia (cap. viii), Christian IV perceived that the dominion of the northern seas, which he regarded as the most precious jewel in his crown, was about to pass away from him. Moreover a common distrust of Denmark now began to draw the Netherlands and Sweden together. Oldenbarneveld regarded Sweden as an advantageous counterpoise to Denmark in the Baltic; and Sweden gladly seized the opportunity of securing the amity and assistance of the Netherlands. In 1614 Gustavus Adolphus joined the Dutch-Lübeck alliance, which was virtually an anti-Danish league.

Thus Denmark became more than ever separated from the other Protestant powers; and, as Christian IV at first steadily refused to contract any alliance with his co-religionists, the Catholic powers began to have hopes of him. Spain even sent an embassy to Copenhagen in 1617; but, though Christian rejected her overtures, he was inclined for a time to listen to proposals for an alliance from Sigismund of Poland, till North Germany offered him a nearer and more convenient field for his ambition. His object was twofold—first to obtain the control of the great German rivers, the Elbe and the Weser, as a means of securing his dominion of the northern seas; and secondly to acquire the secularised German bishoprics as appanages for his younger sons. Now the acquisition of these very bishoprics was one of the burning questions of the day. The Catholic party hoped to recover them in the near future; nearly every North German prince of any importance, including the dukes of Holstein, also coveted them; while Gustavus Adolphus watchfully observed every step of his rival's policy south of the Elbe, and offered both the Hanse towns and the German princes his protection against Denmark. Equally

disquieted were the Netherlands by Christian's attempts to dominate the Elbe and the Weser, for a Danish prince in possession of the see of Bremen would be as great an obstacle to their trade as the Sound tolls.

Meanwhile great events were happening in Germany, which were to be decisive of the future of Europe. In May, 1618, the Bohemian Estates rose against their Habsburg king, Ferdinand; and, in August, 1619, they elected in his stead the Elector Palatine Frederick V. The Thirty Years' War now began. It soon became evident that, in vigour, capacity, and power of cohesion, the Catholics were far superior to the Protestants. Very few of the German Evangelical princes supported the new king of Bohemia; and Frederick himself was not the man to rally a drooping cause. The battle of the White Mountain converted him into an outlawed fugitive; and his domains were confiscated by the Emperor. The war now dwindled down to mere raiding, feebly fed by intermittent Dutch subsidies. Christian IV was profoundly impressed by this upheaval. He was not without sympathy for his nephew, the ex-king of Bohemia, but for once he listened to the advice of his Raad to wait the issue of events. Nevertheless he skilfully profited by the alarm of the German Protestant towns and princes to secure the coadjutorship to the see of Bremen for his son Duke Frederick (September, 1621), a step followed in November by a similar arrangement as to Werden; while Hamburg, by the compact of Steinburg (July, 1621), was induced to acknowledge the Danish overlordship of Holstein.

But the Catholics were also zealous at the work of appropriation. In February, 1623, the Palatinate was bestowed by the Emperor upon Maximilian of Bavaria, in direct violation of the Imperial constitution, thereby giving the Catholics a majority in the Electoral College. Simultaneously the troops of Spain and the League drew nearer to the Lower Saxon Circle; and a Catholic was elected bishop of Osnabrück. With his eye steadily fixed upon the coveted bishoprics,

Christian now felt strongly inclined, for purely political reasons, to champion the cause of the North German Protestants ; and in July, 1623, with the help of subsidies tardily granted by the Raad, he began to levy troops on behalf of the Lower Saxon Circle, concentrating his forces at Rensborg, while a so-called defensive alliance was arranged with the princes of that Circle. He still, indeed, professed to be neutral, but his neutrality was rapidly becoming an armed neutrality. Tilly's victory over Christian of Brunswick in July, 1623, the hesitation of the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, and, above all, his critical relations with Sweden during 1623, combined, however, to make him hold his hand for a time.

But now a great change took place in the European situation. James I at last abandoned his fruitless negotiations with Spain and contracted an alliance with France, an alliance cemented by the marriage of the Prince of Wales with Henrietta Maria, the French king's daughter. Almost simultaneously (April, 1624) Cardinal Richelieu entered the French ministry ; and from that moment the house of Habsburg had a new and irreconcilable enemy to face. To secure the co-operation of the northern powers, Robert Anstruther was despatched to Denmark and James Spence to Sweden. Spence's vague representations failed to convince the far-seeing statesmanship of Gustavus Adolphus ; but Anstruther easily persuaded Christian IV. What weighed most with Christian was the fear lest Gustavus Adolphus should supplant him as the leader of the German Protestants. The Rigsraad earnestly dissuaded him from departing from his neutrality before he was certain of money and active assistance from his allies ; and at first Christian listened to his counsellors. But finally impatience, ambition, an over-sanguine confidence, and, above all, jealousy of Sweden, induced him recklessly to plunge into a war against the combined forces of the Emperor and the League, without any adequate guarantees of co-operation from abroad. His immediate allies, the North German princes and towns, proved more

than usually unreliable and parsimonious. At a congress held at Lauenburg under his presidency some measures were indeed taken for the defence of the Lower Saxon Circle (Lauenburg recess, March 25, 1625), while the Lüneburg Kreistag elected him its chief; but the Elector of Brandenburg would give no promise of assistance, and the Brunswick Kreistag, which met in May to fix the respective military contingents of the allies, consented to war only by a bare majority, to which Christian himself contributed two votes.

On May 9, 1625, Christian IV quitted Denmark for the front. At Steinburg, in southern Holstein, he mustered his troops, consisting mainly of Germans, for, as he was waging war as duke of Holstein, no regular levies had been made in Denmark. He had at his disposal from fifteen to twenty thousand infantry and four to five thousand cavalry, irrespective of the troops of the Lower Saxon Circle. The king himself was generalissimo; Duke Johan Ernst of Saxe-Weimar commanded the cavalry; and General Johan Philip Fuchs, an old soldier of fortune, "with a keener eye for difficulties than for the means of overcoming them," led the infantry. On June 7 Christian crossed the Elbe and marched to Hameln, occupying all the fortresses along the river. Unexpected difficulties accumulated during his march. The army was undisciplined, and ill-provided with artillery; and the officers could not be paid because the stipulated contributions from the Circles were not forthcoming. Tilly, who had watched Christian's advance from his own quarters in the diocese of Paderborn, himself crossed the Weser at Höxter on July 18; and the Danish division, reconnoitring in the district, retired before him. And now, just when vigorous action was essential to Christian's success, a great misfortune befell him. On July 20, while riding on the ramparts of Hameln, then under repair, his horse stumbled and flung him into a deep hole. He was picked up and carried back to Werden unconscious. A month later he insisted upon resuming the command; but his energy was

considerably impaired for the rest of the campaign. Meanwhile Tilly, advancing rapidly, captured Hameln and other fortresses. Niemburg on the Weser was the first obstacle to his victorious advance; and when Christian, in the middle of September, relieved the place, Tilly retired to the south-eastern part of the Lower Saxon Circle. But the old Walloon was no longer the only enemy. A Bohemian nobleman, Albrecht Eusebius von Waldstein, or Wallenstein, now volunteered to raise another army for the Emperor; and by the autumn of 1625 he had already occupied the dioceses of Magdeburg and Halberstadt.

Christian IV was still in the Lower Saxon Circle with his headquarters at Rotenburg. The clouds had begun to clear. Ernest of Mansfeld and Christian of Brunswick had joined him; and the States General had invited France and the Protestant princes to a congress at the Hague for the purpose of forming a general alliance. The congress proved a failure, as France, Sweden, Brandenburg, and Saxony ignored the invitation; but, on the other hand, a treaty was signed between Denmark, England, and the Netherlands; and the western powers promised considerable subsidies if Christian IV would maintain an army of from thirty-five to thirty-eight thousand men against the Emperor. Christian IV was now quite alive to the difficulties of the situation, and doing his utmost to meet them. Troops were at last levied in Denmark proper; a line of fortification was begun between Lübeck and Hamburg to protect the southern Danish frontier; and the Estates of Brunswick were induced to vote a military contingent. Negotiations had also been opened at Brunswick with Tilly and Wallenstein, but in February, 1626, they were broken off. And now fresh disappointments came thick and fast. The Netherlands sent a few troops instead of money; but England's promises remained unfulfilled. The duke of Holstein, too, refused to co-operate; and George, duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg, openly joined the Emperor.

Nevertheless Christian IV resolved to open the campaign

of 1626 by assuming the offensive. John Ernest of Saxe-Weimar was sent westward to open communications with the Netherlands and procure the election of Christian's second son, Frederick, to the vacant bishopric of Osnabrück, in both of which enterprises he succeeded, besides drawing off Tilly from Brunswick to Paderborn. Fuchs and Mansfeld meanwhile marched westward to Silesia, to join hands with Gabriel Bethlen, prince of Transylvania; but this hazardous enterprise was frustrated by Wallenstein's victory over Mansfeld at Rosslau (April 15), whereupon Christian recalled John Ernest from the west to reinforce Fuchs and Mansfeld. Tilly, meanwhile, relieved from the pressure of John Ernest, had driven Christian of Brunswick out of Hesse, and himself advanced against Brunswick. On August 2 he captured Göttingen and turned northward against Northeim; whereupon Christian, having meanwhile recalled Fuchs from the east, resolved to attack Tilly. After relieving Northeim on August 11, he advanced southwards towards Thuringia, with the intention of preventing the junction of Tilly with a division of Wallenstein's army, but failing to do so retired, pursued in his turn, and, on August 27, 1626, was utterly routed by the Imperialist general at Lutter in the difficult mountainous region of the Bärenberg. Tilly's troops thereupon overran the greater part of Werden and Brunswick.

Still more serious were the political consequences of the defeat of Lutter. The weak bands which hitherto had connected the Lower Saxon towns and princes with Christian IV were instantly snapped asunder; of all his allies only the dukes of Mecklenburg remained faithful to him. It is greatly to the honour of Christian IV that, in the midst of these adversities, he displayed no lack of courage and energy. He prevailed upon the Rigsraad to grant additional subsidies, despatched Paul Rosenkrantz to England and France for help, and signed a fresh treaty of alliance with Gabriel Bethlen. Yet these extraordinary efforts had but poor results. Very little money was

received from England and France; and the auxiliary corps, under Colonel Morgan, sent by Charles I, proved altogether inadequate. The ensuing campaign of 1627 was one of unmitigated disaster. An expedition to Silesia and Hungary failed utterly; Christian lost two of his best generals, Ernest of Mansfeld and John Ernest of Saxe-Weimar, in the same year; and a vital blow was struck at his resources when the irresistible tide of war burst at last over Danish territory.

At midnight on July 25 Tilly forced the passage of the Elbe at Bleckede, and by the beginning of August he was in Holstein. A general panic ensued. The king summoned the Rigsraad in haste to Kolding; and that body sanctioned the levying of 12,000 infantry and the arming of the whole male population between the ages of eighteen and fifty-five. But these desperate expedients were all too late. At the end of August Wallenstein, after effecting a junction with Tilly at Büchen in Lauenburg, took the supreme command and invaded Sleswick. The Danish cavalry fled before him, leaving the defence of the isolated fortresses to English, Scotch, and French mercenaries. In a couple of days northern Sleswick was a reeking wilderness. Amidst the general confusion Christian himself lost his head, abandoned Jutland to its fate, and never rested till he had reached the safe seclusion of Dalum Minster, near Odense.

Like the locusts of Apollyon, Wallenstein's mercenaries swooped down upon Jutland, ravaging, burning, and plundering the defenceless country. Denmark itself seemed paralysed. From the first the Raad had been against the war; and its disastrous issue was the Raad's best justification. The king was blamed not only for the military disasters, but for the ravaging of Jutland; sharp notes passed between him and his senators; the nobility showed ominous signs of disloyalty; and the distribution of the subsidies, grudgingly granted to him in May, 1628, was administered by commissioners independent of the Crown. Abroad the outlook was not encouraging. Tilly, in the course of the autumn and winter,

had conquered all that remained to be conquered in the Lower Saxon Circle; and the war now proceeding between England and France deprived Denmark of her last hope of assistance from the West. No wonder that the house of Habsburg now began to dream of a universal empire. At Vienna and Madrid the most extravagant projects were entertained. All the Protestant sees were to be Catholicised; Sleswick was to become a fief of the Empire; while Jutland was to be sold to Spain. An Imperial fleet was to dominate the Baltic with the double object of menacing Denmark and assisting Poland against Sweden; while the trade of the Dutch was to be transferred to the Hanseatic towns. Wallenstein, to whose fantastic imagination nothing seemed impossible, received from the Emperor, in the course of 1628, the title of "Captain-General of the Oceanic and Baltic Seas," together with the forfeited duchies of Mecklenburg as an appanage. Negotiations were also entered into with the duke of Gottorp for making his port of Frederiksstad a naval station for the Spanish fleet.

But the very magnitude of the Habsburg plans benefited Denmark by alarming the other Protestant powers for their own safety. Christian IV, who had by this time recovered his usual energy and gained some slight advantages at sea, was provided by the Dutch with muniments of war sufficient to enable the fortresses of Krempe and Glückstadt to hold out against Wallenstein; and on January 1, 1628, an alliance was signed with Sweden, whereby Gustavus Adolphus pledged himself to assist Denmark with a fleet in case of need. In February, 1628, Wallenstein, to gain a footing on the Baltic, sent General Hans Georg von Arnim to besiege the Hanseatic city of Stralsund, which had refused to admit an Imperial garrison. Stralsund appealed to Denmark and Sweden for help; and each power despatched an auxiliary corps. Simultaneously Christian led an expedition against Pomerania and captured Usedom and Wolgast, thus compelling Wallenstein to abandon the siege of Stralsund in order to recover these

places; while the intervention of Gustavus Adolphus confronted Wallenstein with fresh difficulties. In these circumstances the Emperor became more inclined to make peace with Denmark; and a congress was accordingly opened at Lübeck in January, 1629. The terms of the Imperial plenipotentiaries presented on March 2 were outrageous. They demanded nothing less than the cession of the duchies, the surrender of Jutland to the Elector of Saxony, the abandonment of the North German bishoprics, the payment of the expenses of the war, and the closing of the Sound against all the enemies of the house of Habsburg. Subsequently, however, secret negotiations were opened by Wallenstein with Christian's delegates; and on May 27 a treaty was ratified whereby Jutland and the duchies were restored to Denmark, Christian IV undertaking in return to renounce the North German dioceses, and to abstain altogether from interference in German affairs.

The Peace of Lübeck was hailed in Denmark with general satisfaction. The four years' war had ended more favourably than anyone had dared to hope; all danger for the future seemed averted; no cession of territory had been made; no war-indemnity demanded. In his relief Christian IV ordered a medal to be struck with the inscription: "Tandem bona causa triumphat!" though it would have been equally difficult to explain what the good cause was or how it had triumphed. Yet the war had seriously injured the country. Even those provinces which had not been occupied by the enemy had suffered severely from the levying of taxes and the quartering of troops; while Jutland was so impoverished that fiscally it was likely to remain unproductive for some time to come. The material damage was accompanied by a still more alarming moral retrogression. In many places downright anarchy prevailed; the laws were no longer respected, the authorities no longer obeyed. Moreover the almost general cowardice, slackness, and imbecility of the gentry during the war had justly provoked against them the anger and the hatred of the burgesses and peasants. Never since

"Grevens Fejde" had the tide of indignation against the privileged classes risen so high and raged so fiercely. So strong was this feeling of outraged patriotism that, in the course of 1629, delegates from the Jutland towns met at Viborg, and again at Ry; and a petition was presented to the king urging him to help the towns and the peasantry to their rights again, and to take measures for promoting the national defence irrespective of the privileges of the nobility.

Unfortunately this truly national movement, which might have been the beginning of better things, had no result; everything points to the melancholy fact that at this crisis Christian IV was a broken man. His energy was temporarily paralysed by accumulated misfortunes. Not only his political hopes, but his domestic happiness had suffered shipwreck. In the course of 1628 he discovered a scandalous intrigue of his wife, Christina Munk, with one of his German officers, the Rhinegrave Otto Ludwig von Salm; and when he put her away the lady revenged herself by giving private political information to the Swedish resident at Elsinore, and endeavoured to cover up her own disgrace by only too successfully conniving at an intrigue between Vibeke Kruse, one of her discharged maids, and the king. In January, 1630, the rupture became final; and Christina and her mother retired to their estates in Jutland. Meanwhile Christian openly acknowledged Vibeke as his mistress; and she bore him a numerous family, upon whom he wasted large sums of money. Vibeke's children were of course the natural enemies of the children of Christina Munk; and the hatred between the two families was not without influence on the future history of Denmark.

Nor was the measure of Christian's wretchedness even yet filled up. In October, 1631, he lost his mother, Queen Sophia, who had always been a financial support as well as an affectionate parent; while in August, 1633, his youngest son, Duke Ulric, by far the most promising of the Danish princes, was assassinated in Silesia. And at this very time Denmark was

visited by one national calamity after another. In September, 1629, Frederick II's splendid castle of Kronborg was destroyed by fire; the next few years were memorable for a series of epidemics; and in October, 1634, a terrible storm devastated the south-west coasts of Jutland. And all this time the country was groaning beneath a hitherto unprecedented load of taxation. Between 1600 and 1614 fourteen separate subsidies, amounting to 1,900,000 rix-dollars, had been levied; and during the years 1629–1643 no fewer than thirty-five subsidies, amounting to 3,900,000 rix-dollars, were imposed in the proportion of two-thirds to Denmark and one-third to Norway. Of this amount 2,500,000 rix-dollars were applied to the maintenance of a standing army. In Denmark proper the peasantry paid about three-fourths, and the clergy and the towns the rest of this relatively enormous impost. Nevertheless, between 1629 and 1643 the monarchy gained both in popularity and influence. During that period Christian obtained the control of the foreign policy of Denmark as well as of the Sound tolls, and, towards the end of it, he hoped to increase his power still further with the assistance of his sons-in-law, who now came prominently forward.

Even after his divorce from Christina Munk, Christian IV dearly loved his seven daughters by her, despite their growing hatred of his children by Vibeke Kruse; and he was at some pains to provide the former with suitable husbands who should share their splendour and increase his own authority. All these young "countesses" had one feature in common, an inordinate idea of their superior dignity as the king's daughters, and a determination to enjoy the privileges attached to that dignity to the very uttermost at their country's expense. Of their husbands only two deserve especial mention, Korfits Ulfeld and Hannibal Sehested. Ulfeld, the son of the respected chancellor, Jacob Ulfeld, was born in 1606; Hannibal Sehested was three years younger. Both of them received abroad the best education that the age could offer them; both of them entered the royal

service on their return home; and to each of them a daughter of the king, while still a child, was solemnly betrothed, Leonora Christina to Ulfeld and Christiana to Sehested. Ulfeld's age gave him the advantage of his brother-in-law. His marriage took place in 1636, Sehested's six years later, whereupon both took their seats in the Rigsraad. Sehested was entrusted with missions abroad. His lucid intellect, brilliant social gifts, and consummate tact made him an ideal diplomatist; nor did his cynicism, inveterate sensuality, and all-embracing egotism stand in the way of his advancement. In 1642 he was made stadt-holder of Norway, and in that capacity displayed administrative ability of a high order. Ulfeld, the most striking personality at the Danish court, was at first mostly employed at home. In all superficial graces and mental accomplishments he far outshone his compeers. Yet, if his parts were brilliant, his nature was base; and his ambition, avarice, and absolute lack of honour and conscience were to convert him at no distant day into a traitor and a scoundrel. But now, with a wife by his side who was at once the most beautiful, the most talented, the most courageous, and the most unscrupulous of the king's daughters, he was the natural leader of the royal sons-in-law; and his appointment in 1643 to the dignity of lord high steward made him at the same time the first minister of the Crown.

Even at the lowest ebb of his fortunes Christian IV had never lost the hope of retrieving them; and between 1629 and 1643 the European situation presented infinite possibilities to speculative politicians with a taste for adventure. The Thirty Years' War was losing more and more of its original character of a war of religion. Political considerations overbore all other. The growing tension between the two Protestant Scandinavian powers threatened a speedy rupture; and Catholic France had extended the hand of friendship to Gustavus Adolphus. The whole struggle, in fact, was merging into a trial of strength between the houses of Bourbon and Habsburg. A statesman at Copenhagen, like Griffenfeld for instance, would have made

his opportunities and profited by them. Unfortunately, with all his gifts, Christian IV was no statesman. He was incapable of a consistent policy, and preferred playing with half-a-dozen contradictory projects to steadily adopting any one of them. Thus he would neither conciliate Sweden, henceforth his most dangerous neighbour, nor guard himself against her by a definite system of counter-alliances. In a word, his whole diplomatic system was pettifogging and tortuous. Despite the Peace of Lübeck, he still hoped to recover his influence in North Germany, especially on the Elbe. His attempt, in 1630, to enforce the Compact of Steinburg, whereby Hamburg had acknowledged the sovereignty of Holstein in 1621, led indeed to the humiliation of the Hanse town, but at the same time alienated Christian from all his contingent allies, who resented the imposition of tolls upon the Elbe trade by Denmark. Meanwhile Sweden, by the acquisition of Livonia and the Prussian littoral, was becoming a dangerous rival in the Baltic; and with ever-increasing bitterness Christian watched the steady development of her power. Moreover, despite all his efforts to prevent it, Gustavus Adolphus in 1630 landed in Germany actively to participate in the great European struggle.

To say nothing of its world-wide significance, the intervention marks a turning-point in Scandinavian history. Gustavus Adolphus had practically supplanted Christian IV. The extension of the Swedish dominion along the Baltic threatened the very heart of Denmark. The hegemony of the North was to be fought out on the battlefields of Germany. It was therefore with a secret feeling of relief that Christian, two years later, received the news of his great rival's death at Lützen, though his tears of sympathy, on first hearing the tidings of that tragedy, were perfectly sincere. For the position of Sweden in Germany seemed weaker than before, and the position of Denmark stronger. On the other hand, Axel Oxenstjerna, who now controlled the destinies of Sweden, rightly regarded his country as primarily a

Scandinavian power ; and his policy was therefore more acutely anti-Danish than his great master's had been.

Christian IV now bent all his efforts towards minimising the influence of Sweden in Germany by mediating in favour of the Emperor, and contrived to glean some minor advantages. Thus in 1633 the Emperor conceded the Elbe tolls to him for four years ; and in November, 1634, the Estates of Bremen elected his son, Duke Frederick, archbishop of Bremen. Encouraged by these successes, but still more alarmed by the progress of the Swedes, Christian, at the same time that he offered his mediation, concluded a secret compact with the Emperor against Sweden. In the spring of 1637 a congress, under the mediation of Denmark, met at Hamburg ; and on December 15, 1641, preliminaries were drawn up, subsequently to be submitted to a definitive peace congress which was to assemble at Münster and Osnabrück in March, 1642. Christian's position as the arbiter of the peace of Europe was imposing enough, but so far from bringing him any corresponding political advantages it only embroiled him with Sweden. And yet to hinder the expansion of Sweden's power south of the Baltic was indubitably the correct policy for Denmark. Sweden in those days was an aggressive power; her leading statesmen were restless and ambitious, and they knew they could always count upon the strong anti-Danish feeling of the Swedish people. The domination of the North was the object they set before them ; and only Denmark barred the way. Well aware of this, Christian IV should have avoided what we now call "a policy of pin-pricks," which irritates without disabling ; but this, unfortunately, was just the sort of policy he pursued by preference.

Still more reprehensible was his neglect of the most ordinary diplomatic precautions. With a war with Sweden on the threshold, it should have been his first duty to provide Denmark with serviceable allies ; and the most obvious of such allies were the United Provinces, whose treaty with Sweden expired in 1629, and whose resentment at the ruinous

tolls levied by the Swedish government in all the ports of Livonia, Prussia, Pomerania, and Mecklenburg was then at its height. Denmark thus possessed an unrivalled opportunity of supplanting Sweden as the ally of the Dutch; and the Rigsraad again and again counselled such an approximation. Unfortunately the king, intent on smaller momentary advantages, not only neglected the far weightier matter of the Dutch alliance, but proceeded to irritate the United Provinces by his diplomatic coquettishness with Spain. Sehested was sent to Madrid in August, 1640; and by his raising of the Sound tolls—the income thence derived rising from 230,000 to 600,000 rix-dollars in a couple of years—Christian IV forfeited the amity of the United Provinces at the most critical period of his career. So strong was the Dutch animus against Denmark during 1640 that a rupture seemed imminent; and in September the alliance between Holland and Sweden was renewed for fifteen years, an alliance tacitly directed against Denmark.

In Sweden Christian IV's toll policy was still more bitterly resented. By the Peace of Knäred Swedish subjects had been guaranteed exemption from the Sound tolls; but Christian refused to extend this privilege to the newly acquired Swedish provinces, or to Swedish merchandise carried in Dutch ships. He also refused to allow muniments of war to pass through the Sound at the very time when Sweden's metal industry and the manufacture of arms and powder supplied her with some of her most lucrative exports. All these vexations and grievances had long convinced Swedish statesmen that a war with Denmark was only a question of time; and in the spring of 1643 it seemed to them that the time had come. They were now able for the first time to attack Denmark from the south as well as from the east; the Dutch alliance promised to secure them at sea; and—what was most important—an attack upon Denmark would prevent her from utilising the impending peace negotiations to the prejudice of Sweden, for a belligerent could not mediate.

In May Axel Oxenstjerna laid the matter before the

Riksråd ; and it was agreed that war should begin if the Danish Rigsraad, upon due representations being made to them, failed to induce Christian to change his policy. The same day orders were sent to Lennart Torstensson, then in the heart of Moravia, to march to the Baltic coast, cross the Holstein frontier, penetrate as far as possible into Jutland, and provide for a simultaneous invasion of Fünen and Sjælland. A sharp note was then directed to the Danish Raad ; but nobody in Denmark regarded it in the light of an ultimatum. By the end of September Torstensson received his instructions. After arranging a truce with the Imperial commander Gallas, he set out on his march northwards. On December 12 he had crossed the border ; and within a week all Holstein, except the fortresses of Glückstadt and Krempe, was in his possession. By January 9, 1644, he had penetrated into North Jutland ; a Danish force of 5000 men, encamped at Snöghoj, surrendered after a few days' cannonade ; and by January 20 the whole peninsula was occupied and the islands threatened. This totally unexpected attack, conducted from first to last with consummate ability and lightning-like rapidity, caused a terrible panic in Denmark. From Jutland, still mindful of the horrors of sixteen years before, there was a general exodus ; everyone who could fly, fled. Nor was this all. A fresh danger now appeared on Denmark's political horizon. Frederick III, duke of Holstein-Gottorp, purchased neutrality by surrendering his fortresses to the enemy. The first step in the fatal approximation of Holstein to Sweden had been taken.

Fortunately, in the midst of almost universal helplessness and confusion, there was still one man who knew his duty and had the courage to do it, and that man was Christian IV. In his sixty-sixth year he once more displayed something of the magnificent energy of his triumphant youth. Night and day he laboured to levy armies and equip fleets. The forces at his disposal amounted to about 6000 horse and 20,000 foot ; and in the Christmas week of 1643 he set off for Fünen to take

supreme command. Fortunately, too, the Swedish government delayed hostilities in Scania till February, 1644, so that, when Gustavus Horn crossed the eastern border, he found the Danes prepared to meet him; and, though he quickly captured Lund and Helsingborg, the incomparably more important Malmö resisted him. In the eastern provinces, indeed, the war was from first to last of the usual brutal guerilla type, a war of harrying, burning, and plundering; but the islands, the cradle of the monarchy, remained intact. Torstensson was unable to cross over to Fünen; an Imperial commissioner appeared at Copenhagen to negotiate an alliance with Denmark; and the United Provinces, divided between alarm at the triumphs of Sweden and a desire for revenge upon Denmark, long hesitated between peace and war. At length the representations of the Swedish envoy, Ludvig de Geer, prevailed; and in April, 1644, an auxiliary fleet, under Admiral Martin Thijssen, sailed from Holland to assist Torstensson to transport his troops to Fünen. But Christian's fleet was ready for it; and on May 16 the squadrons encountered each other between Sild and Rönnö on the west coast of Sleswick. Though superior to the Danish, Thijssen's fleet, after a hard fight, was compelled to retire; and eight days later it was so badly beaten by Admirals Ove Gjedde and Pros Mund that it returned to Holland. On June 1 the Swedish fleet of forty sail, under Klas Fleming, sailed from Stockholm to Kiel to convey Torstensson and his troops to Sjælland. Christian IV, with a somewhat superior fleet, quitted Copenhagen to seek the enemy on June 29. The two fleets encountered each other off Kolberger Heide in the south-east portion of Kiel Bay on July 1, on which occasion Christian IV displayed a heroism which endeared him ever afterwards to the Danish nation, and made his name famous in song and story. As he stood on the quarter-deck of the *Trinity* a cannon close by was exploded by a Swedish bullet, and splinters of wood and metal wounded the king in thirteen places, blinding one eye, damaging his right ear, and flinging him to the deck. But

he was instantly on his feet again, cried with a loud voice that it was well with him, and set everyone an example of duty by remaining on deck till the fight was over. Darkness at last separated the contending fleets ; and, though the battle was a drawn one, the Danish fleet showed its superiority by blockading the Swedish ships in Kiel Bay.

In Jutland also things began to look more hopeful. In the middle of July the Imperialists, under Gallas, marched into Holstein. Torstensson's position seemed to be critical. But again the tide turned. On July 30 the Swedish fleet, favoured by the wind, emerged from Kiel Bay ; the Danish admiral, Peder Galt, neglected a favourable opportunity of attacking it, and the Swedes escaped to Bornholm. Peder Galt was incontinently tried and shot for his stupidity, but that did not mend matters. On land, too, Christian's hopes were disappointed. Gallas retreated to the south-east ; Torstensson at once pursued him ; and in the beginning of September Jutland was reoccupied by the Swedes. Meanwhile, owing to the untiring exertions of Ludvig de Geer, another Dutch fleet of twenty-two sail left Holland ; and a thrill of dismay passed through Denmark when the fortress of Kronborg, which was supposed to dominate the narrow waters of the Sound, proved powerless to arrest the progress of the Dutch ships, which, on August 9, passed Elsinore unscathed. By the end of September the Dutch and Swedish fleets, together forty sail, had united, and on October 13 this Imperial armament encountered the Danish admiral, with only seventeen ships, between Femern and Laaland, and, after a stubborn fight, annihilated his squadron.

Denmark's military resources were now exhausted ; there was no hope of any further assistance from the Emperor ; and all negotiations in other directions proved fruitless. In these desperate circumstances Christian IV gladly accepted the proffered mediation of France and the United Provinces, both of them anxious to release the Swedish armies for further service in Germany ; and a peace congress was opened on

February 8, 1645, at Brömsebro on Kalmar Sound, near the Dano-Swedish frontier. The negotiations were protracted till August 13, when a peace was signed whereby Sweden acquired definitively the islands of Ösel and Gothland, the provinces of Jemteland and Herjedal, and Halland for thirty years. The freedom from the Sound tolls was also extended to Sweden's Baltic provinces. On the same day, by the Treaty of Kristianopel, very considerable reductions in the Sound and the Norwegian tolls were conceded to the Dutch.

The Peace of Brömsebro was the first of the long series of treaties, extending down to our own days, which mark the progressive shrinkage of Danish territory into an irreducible minimum. Sweden's appropriation of Danish soil had begun; and at the same time Denmark's power of resisting the encroachments of Sweden was correspondingly reduced. The Danish national debt, too, had risen enormously, while the sources of future income and consequent recuperation had diminished or disappeared. The Sound tolls, for instance, in consequence of the treaties of Brömsebro and Kristianopel, had sunk from 400,000 to 140,000 rix-dollars; and the Elbe tolls, by a special agreement with Hamburg, 1645, had been abandoned altogether. The political influence of the Crown, moreover, despite the energy and heroism displayed by Christian IV during the war, had inevitably been weakened, inasmuch as the foreign policy, for which the king was mainly responsible, had suffered total shipwreck. The conduct of foreign affairs therefore now began to glide out of his hands. It was a significant symptom of the decline of the royal authority when Christian, in August, 1645, resigned his exclusive right to fill up vacancies in the Rigsraad; henceforth he was to choose from among eight nominees presented to him by the Raad itself.

The last years of the dejected monarch were still further embittered by sordid differences with his sons-in-law, especially with the most ambitious of them, Korfits Ulfeld. Christian attributed the naval collapse of 1644 to the remissness of Ulfeld;

and the unlucky result of the peace negotiations, during which Ulfeld was the chief Danish negotiator, embittered Christian still further against him. When the Treaty of Brömsebro was signed, there was a violent scene between the king and Ulfeld; yet, when Ulfeld offered his resignation, the king durst not accept it. Personal grievances still further exacerbated what was originally a political quarrel, for, during and after the war, the long simmering ill-will between Christina Munk's children and the children of Vibeke Kruse, whose influence remained unimpaired, flamed up anew, especially when Vibeke's daughter, Elizabeth Sophia, was affianced to Major-General Klaus Ahlefeld. Matters proceeded to such lengths that Christian felt justified in detaining Christina Munk (February, 1646) in her Jutland manor-house, and depriving her of the control of her property. This last step was regarded by the nobility in general as a violation of the charter; and all the king's sons-in-law thereupon combined against him. In December the rupture was patched up; and Ulfeld, acute enough to perceive that an alliance with the Netherlands was the best counterpoise against Sweden, obtained the king's consent to depart, as ambassador extraordinary, to the Hague to bring about more friendly relations between the two countries. A defensive alliance, indeed, owing to divergent opinions in the Netherlands and to Swedish intrigues, he was unable to accomplish; but, after protracted negotiations, he succeeded in obtaining a treaty (February, 1647) regulating the long-pending toll question.

The results of his embassy by no means corresponded to their costliness, and, when he returned to Denmark in July, 1647, he found the king profoundly irritated against him, and his rival, Hannibal Sehested, in almost exclusive possession of the royal confidence. Ulfeld, supported by the Raad and the nobility, who resented the elevation of Vibeke's children, and objected to the whole commercial and fiscal policy of the king, was emboldened openly to resist both his father-in-law and his brother-in-law, and triumphed completely. Broken by age, illness, misfortunes

and excesses, the old king finally gave way on every point. His last dream of aggrandising the royal power had failed utterly. The aristocracy, the Rigsraad, the faction of the sons-in-law had triumphed. Christian IV never recovered from the shock of this last humiliation. On February 21, 1648, at his earnest request, the dying monarch was carried in a litter from Frederiksborg to his beloved Copenhagen, where he expired a week later in his 71st year. Rarely has a life which opened with such brilliant promise ended in such dismal and unmitigated failure. Christian's cardinal defect was to overvalue his own abilities and the resources of his country; and he paid the penalty of his miscalculation to the very last farthing. Yet his manly figure, standing boldly out as it does against a murky background of almost universal egotism and cowardice, looks bright and heroic by the contrast.

CHAPTER VIII.

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS AND AXEL OXENSTJERNA, 1611-1644.

WHEN Charles IX died at Nyköping on October 30, 1611, he left his country environed with dangers. The Danes held the two chief fortresses of Sweden, and the heart of the land lay open before them ; the disruption of Russia had forced upon Sweden a policy of conquest over-seas, with altogether inadequate resources ; and victorious Poland, already in possession of Moscow, was preparing to expel the intrusive Swedes from her Baltic provinces. The grievous burden of empire now rested on the shoulders of a youth of seventeen, whose title to the throne, if not disputed, was at least disputable. Yet the dying monarch rightly judged that he was leaving his affairs in better hands than his own. *Ille faciet* were the prophetic words with which, on his death-bed, he indicated to his counsellors his eldest son as his successor.

Gustavus Adolphus was born at Stockholm Castle on December 9, 1594. From the first he was carefully nurtured, to be the future prop of Protestantism, by his austere father. Gustavus was well grounded in the classics, and his linguistic accomplishments were extraordinary. He may be said to have grown up with two mother-tongues, Swedish and German ; at twelve he had mastered Latin, Italian, and Dutch, and he learnt subsequently to express himself in Spanish, Russian, and Polish. But his practical father took care that he should grow

up a prince, not a pedant. So early as his ninth year he was introduced to public life ; at thirteen he received petitions and conversed officially with the foreign ministers ; at fifteen he administered his duchy of Vestmannland and opened the Örebro Riksdag with a speech from the throne ; indeed from 1610 he may be regarded as his father's co-regent. In all martial and chivalrous accomplishments he was already an adept ; and when, a year later, he succeeded to supreme power, his superior ability was as uncontested as it was incontestable, while a singularly winning exterior and a peculiar charm of manner, the index of a noble heart, predisposed all men in his favour.

For the first six weeks after the death of Charles IX there was an interregnum in Sweden. Some doubt existed as to who was the lawful king. It is true that by the decree of the Norrköping Riksdag, which transferred the right of succession to the line of Duke Charles, Gustavus was the legitimate heir to the throne ; yet, by the natural law of descent, setting aside Sigismund and his line, Duke John of Östergötland, the son of John III, was the rightful heir. Charles IX himself had maintained in his last will that the duke's natural right stood higher than any parliamentary decree. The matter was settled by the Nyköping Riksdag of 1611, which assembled on December 10. John himself opened Parliament, and, six days later, publicly surrendered the government to Gustavus Adolphus, at the same time bestowing his benediction on the young king, and exhorting him to govern the realm according to God's Word and the law of Sweden—a picture of kinsmanlike goodwill, as edifying as it was unusual in the Vasa family. On January 6, 1612, Gustavus Adolphus dismissed the Estates, after signing a royal assurance whereby the liberty and property of the subject were effectually secured against royal tyranny in the future, the privileges of the gentry were confirmed, and the political influence of the Råd was increased at the expense both of the Crown and the people. Henceforth the king was

not to declare war, conclude peace, alter old or make new laws, without the knowledge or consent of the Råd and the Riksdag. The Råd, moreover, was also to control the imposition of tolls and taxes and to decide when the Riksdag was to be summoned. It was fortunate that the well-defined prerogatives of an hereditary monarchy and the sturdy independence of the lower Estates effectually counterpoised the authority of the patricians, and saved Sweden from the almost inevitable abuses of an oligarchy from which Denmark was already beginning to suffer.

The first act of the young king was to terminate the fratricidal struggle with Denmark-Norway. He had made plain his pacific dispositions a few days after his succession by omitting from his royal title the words, "King of the Lapps of Nordland," whereby his father had given such offence to the Danes; but it was not till a couple of years later that the struggle was terminated by the Peace of Knäred (January 28, 1613, (p. 155).

Simultaneously another war, also an heritage from Charles IX, had been proceeding in the far distant regions round Lakes Ilmen, Peipus, and Ladoga, with Great Novgorod as its centre. It was not, however, like the Danish war, a national danger, but a political speculation meant to be remunerative and compensatory. We have already seen (p. 141) how Jacob De la Gardie, the Swedish commander in those parts, occupied Great Novgorod in the summer of 1611. Sword in hand, he compelled the citizens of the richest city in Moscow to accept the suzerainty of Sweden, and acknowledge Duke Charles Philip, Gustavus Adolphus's brother, as their Tsar. Already Swedish statesmen began to imagine a trans-Baltic dominion extending from Lake Ilmen northwards to Archangel, and eastwards to Vologda.

The spontaneous election of Michael Romanov as Tsar of Moscow by the Russian clergy and people in February, 1613, dissipated this dream of empire. Gustavus himself

ultimately recognised its futility, though at first he was disposed to retain Great Novgorod and unite it with Sweden, as Lithuania had been united to Poland. But even this modified ambition had soon to be abandoned. In vain did the Swedes, in the course of 1612, conquer one Ingrian fortress after another ; Pskov, the most important stronghold in those parts, regarded by Sweden, Russia, and Poland alike as the key of Livonia, steadily resisted them ; the Russians began to concentrate their forces west of Lake Peipus ; and, by the end of 1613, De la Gardie felt insecure in Great Novgorod itself. The conclusion of the Danish war, however, released large bodies of troops for service in the Baltic provinces ; and in the summer of 1614 Gustavus himself arrived at the seat of war. At Narva he joined the division which had succeeded on September 10 in recapturing Gdov from the Russians. De la Gardie's position, meanwhile, had been secured by his victories over the Moscovites at Bronitsi and Staraya Russa ; but the campaign as a whole proved abortive. On July 8, 1615, Gustavus a second time crossed the seas, and, on the 30th, stood before Pskov ; but, though a breach was made in the walls, every effort to take the stubbornly defended fortress failed ; and in the middle of October Gustavus was forced to raise the siege and retire to Finland. It was on this occasion that what may be regarded as the first Finnish Landtag was held at Helsingfors (January, 1616).

By this time Swedish statesmen had become convinced of the impossibility of partitioning reunited Moscovy ; while Moscovy (perpetually harried in the west by the Polacks, in the south by the Tatars, and in the north by myriads of free-booters, the outcrop of the national misery) recognised the necessity of buying off the invincible Swedes by some cession of territory. The new Tsar had already invited the good offices of England ; and a peace congress was opened at the village of Dederina. The negotiations were protracted over eighteen months, and only came to a conclusion when the Swedish

delegates openly threatened an immediate resumption of hostilities. Finally, on February 27, 1617, peace was signed at Stolbova. Moscow ceded to Sweden the provinces of Kexholm and Ingria, including the fortress of Nöteborg on the Neva (the subsequent Schlüsselburg), the key of Finland. Russia furthermore renounced all claims upon Estonia and Livonia, and paid a war-indemnity of 20,000 rubles. In return for these concessions Sweden surrendered Great Novgorod, and acknowledged Michael Romanov as Tsar of Moscow. The Peace of Stolbova denotes the high-water mark of Sweden's progression eastwards. Gustavus had succeeded in excluding Moscow from the Baltic. "I hope to God," he declared to the Stockholm Riksdag of 1617, when he announced the conclusion of peace, "that the Russians will feel it a bit difficult to skip over *that* little brook." He recognised, indeed, the latent strength of the vast Russian empire, and warned his subjects that, if only the Russians learnt justly to appreciate their own resources, and succeeded in recovering their lost territory, they would become a menace to Europe. But at the same time he undoubtedly underestimated the danger of attempting forcibly to cut Russia off from her natural means of communication with the western world; and he never realised how impossible it was for a nation numbering scarce a million, even when armed with the weapons of a superior civilisation, permanently to gag and bind a neighbouring nation of more than thirty millions. Sweden was far too feeble for such a Herculean task. Her hold upon the Baltic provinces could never be more than a prolonged military occupation: the only wonder is that she resisted for so long the immense and ever-increasing pressure from within, which was bound, sooner or later, to burst asunder the flimsy barriers of her artificial empire and hurl her back upon her native peninsula.

Thus the second of the two wars inherited from his father had been terminated by Gustavus. The long-outstanding

feud with his last and most obstinate adversary, the Polish Republic, still remained. But first his presence was required in Sweden itself.

Although the whole reign of Gustavus Adolphus is a long chain of almost imperceptibly interlinking wars, during which the king was necessarily absent from his country, her welfare was always his chief care ; and the same period which saw the extension of the Swedish empire abroad saw also the peaceful development of the Swedish constitution at home. In this, as in every other matter, Gustavus himself took the initiative. Nominally the Senate remained the dominant power in the State ; but gradually all real authority was transferred to the Crown. Various were the causes of this salutary change. The Swedish nation owed to the monarchy its unity and independence, and consequently regarded its kings with gratitude and a devotion which could find excuses even for the crimes of Eric XIV and the cruelties of Charles IX. What then must have been its enthusiasm for Gustavus, whose character presented that most rare and noble combination of strength and gentleness, and whose alert genius was perpetually opening up new paths of prosperity in every direction ? It was only natural that the Riksråd should speedily lose its ancient character of a grand council representing the semi-feudal landed aristocracy, and become instead a bureaucracy holding the chief offices of state by the appointment and at the will of the king.

This change operated insensibly throughout the reign of Gustavus. During the king's frequent absences abroad, a committee of the Råd, consisting of the great officers of state and the chiefs of the various "Kollegier," or public departments, regularly assembled in the capital, and conducted the administration, subject only to the royal authority and the consent and co-operation of the Riksdag. In the constitution of 1634 we find the whole system in complete working order. The Riksdag also is now changing its character,

and becoming a legally recognised power in the State. This, of itself, marks a momentous turning-point in Swedish history. Whilst in every other European country, except England, the ancient popular system of representation by Estates was about to disappear altogether, in Sweden, under Gustavus Adolphus, it had grown an integral portion of the constitution. The first step in this direction was taken by the Riksdag ordinance of 1617, which converted a turbulent and haphazard mob of "Riksdag men," "huddling together like a flock of sheep or drunken boors," into a dignified national assembly, meeting and deliberating according to rule and order. The king, surrounded by the princes of the blood, the great officers of state and the senators, now addresses from the throne the Estates solemnly convened together in the Rikssal. One of the nobility (first called the Landtmarskalk, or Marshal of the Diet, in the Riksdag ordinance of 1626) is elected by the king as the spokesman of the first Estate, whilst the primate generally acts as the spokesman of the three lower Estates. The king then submits to the consideration of the Estates "the royal propositions," or matters for debate, upon which each Estate proceeds to deliberate in its own separate chamber. The replies of the Estates are duly delivered to the king at another session in congress. Such was henceforth to be the Riksdag's rule of procedure. Differences of opinion between the king and the Estates were adjusted by mutual discussion; but if the Estates differed amongst themselves, each Estate had to defend its opinion before the king, or "his Majesty might accept whichever [opinion] seemeth him best."

Yet the Riksdag was not merely a deliberative assembly. The "Konungaförsäkran," or royal assurance given by every Swedish king on his accession, guaranteed the collaboration of the Estates in the work of legislation, and they were also to be consulted in all questions of foreign policy. The king possessed the initiative; but the Estates had the right of objecting to the measures of the government at the conclusion

of the Riksdag. It is in Gustavus's reign, too, that we first hear of the "Hemliga Utskott," or Secret Committee, for the transaction of extraordinary affairs, which was elected by the Estates themselves, and provided with full credentials. The constitution of the *Riddarhus*, or Upper House, was fixed by the *Riddarhusordning* of 1626, which divided the nobility into three classes, deliberating in common. Most of the eleven Riksdagar held by Gustavus Adolphus were almost exclusively occupied in finding ways and means for supporting the grievous and ever-increasing burdens of the Polish and German wars. Naturally it was very difficult for the Estates to maintain their independence in the face of a government controlled by a monarch of surpassing genius and boundless popularity. Their very affection and admiration for one who was, in the fullest sense of the word, the father of his people, blinded them to every other consideration but the necessity of supporting him in his most ambitious and hazardous enterprises. For to the eternal honour of the Swedish people be it said, that from first to last they showed a magnanimity, a public spirit, a religious and patriotic zeal, which shrank from no sacrifice, however costly. Even the stubborn obstacle of class egotism was swept away by the impetuous current of enthusiasm when the gentry at the second Riksdag of 1627 voluntarily abandoned many of their most cherished privileges for the common good, and, for a time, it was agreed that all classes should be taxed alike.

It was but natural that great men should arise and flourish in the genial and stimulating atmosphere which surrounded Gustavus Adolphus; and it is not the least of that monarch's many great qualities that he always knew where to lay his hand on those best qualified to assist him in his great designs. Conspicuous amongst these illustrious fellow-workers, hardly inferior to the king himself in native genius and nobility, was the grand chancellor, Oxenstjerna.

Axel Oxenstjerna, whose name is so identified with his

country's history during the most critical period of her existence that the history of his life for half a century is, at the same time, the history of Sweden, was born at Fänö in Upland, on June 16, 1583. His family, which could trace its descent back to the beginning of the thirteenth century, had intermarried with both the Danish and Swedish royal houses. After his father's death in 1597 his prudent mother sent him to the German universities. Latin he learnt so thoroughly that he expressed himself as fluently in that language as in his mother-tongue, and far more elegantly. But theology, from the first, was his favourite study; and he devoted himself to it with as much ardour as if he were about to take holy orders. In 1602 he was recalled to Sweden by Charles IX, who, quickly discerning his worth, employed him on several diplomatic missions, raised him to the dignity of Riksråd when he was but twenty-six years old (1609), and appointed him the guardian of his children, and the head of the regency which was to govern during his son's minority. The first act of Gustavus Adolphus was to appoint him Riks-Canceller, or Imperial chancellor; and from henceforth he became the motive-power of the whole machinery of state, and the indefatigable and indispensable counsellor of his royal friend and master, each supplying to the other the qualities in which he knew himself to be deficient. The impetuous monarch sometimes grew impatient with the judicial prudence of the minister. "If my heat did not put a little life into your coldness, we should all *freeze up!*" exclaimed Gustavus on one occasion. "And if my coldness did not assuage your Majesty's heat," replied the chancellor, "we should all *burn up!*" Whereupon the king laughed, and admitted that indeed he had too little patience and too much temper. Rarely has the world seen an example of such perfect harmony between two great men of equal though widely different genius.

If Axel Oxenstjerna was Gustavus Adolphus's first counsellor, the second was indisputably Johan Skytte, a man of

unusual talent just falling short of genius. He had begun his career as Gustavus's tutor, but, exchanging pedagogy for diplomacy, distinguished himself so greatly that he was ennobled, made a senator, and finally (1629) appointed governor-general of Livonia. His fluent pen, perfect command of Latin, and rhetorical skill, made him invaluable as an ambassador. James I was so impressed by his Ciceronian eloquence on the occasion of his special embassy to England in 1617 that he knighted him on the spot.

The other prominent members of the government were Gabriel Gustafsson Oxenstjerna, the chancellor's brother, and Gabriel Bengtsson Oxenstjerna, his nephew; Klas Fleming, the creator of the Swedish navy; Sten Bjelke, of whom Gustavus said that he knew of none more capable of filling Axel Oxenstjerna's place; and the acute and judicious John Casimir, Count Palatine of Zweibrücken, the brother-in-law of the king. Adler Salvius belongs to a somewhat later day. Finally, several foreigners of distinction were attracted into the service of the newly arising great power, men such as Ludvig Cammerarius, who represented Sweden at the Hague, then the centre of European diplomacy, Hugo Grotius, Van Dyck and Rutgers, Sadler von Salneck, the Englishman Spencer, and many more.

The wars with Russia and Denmark had been almost exclusively Scandinavian wars; the Polish war was of world-wide significance. It was, in the first place, a struggle for the Baltic littoral, upon the possession of which the future prosperity of both states depended; and this struggle was intensified by the knowledge that the Polish Vasas, as represented by Sigismund and his son Wladislaw, denied the right of Gustavus to the Swedish throne, which they claimed by right of primogeniture. Gustavus, moreover, regarded the Polish war as a war of religion. This is plain from his instructions to the plenipotentiaries, whom he sent to the abortive congress of Knäred in the beginning of 1619, to contract, if possible, an

offensive and defensive alliance with the Danes against "the king of Poland, as a principal and dangerous member of the popish league." The two Scandinavian kings are there represented as the two chief pillars on which the evangelical religion reposes; while their disunion and ill-will is regarded as likely to open a door of entrance in the North to the Pope and his league, and so bring about the destruction of Denmark and Sweden alike. There is much of unconscious exaggeration in this. As a matter of fact, the Polish Republic was no danger whatever to Protestantism. All dissenters in Poland, except the Unitarians, were allowed fuller liberty of worship than they enjoyed elsewhere. King Sigismund's obstinate insistence upon his right to the Swedish crown was, after all, the most serious impediment to the conclusion of a war of which the Polish nation was already growing weary. Apart from Sigismund's Jesuit entourage, no responsible Pole dreamed of aggrandisement in Scandinavia; Gustavus, whose imagination was easily excited by religious ardour, magnified the influence of the Jesuits in Poland, and saw dangers where only difficulties existed.

On the death of Charles IX the existing truce between Poland and Sweden was renewed from year to year, while Sigismund was fighting the Moscovites, and Gustavus Adolphus the Danes. Repeated attempts were made to convert these truces into a permanent peace; and the senates of both nations exchanged frequent notes on the subject. But Gustavus refused to negotiate directly with a prince who would allow him no higher title than that of duke of Södermanland; and the war, after an interval of six years, was resumed. It began on the Swedish side with an unsuccessful descent upon Dünamünde. Three years later, when Poland was involved in a desperate struggle with the Turks on the Danube, and their northern frontier was consequently denuded of troops, Gustavus, after Sigismund had again scornfully rejected liberal offers of peace in which even the title of king

of Sweden was conceded to him, resolved to attack Riga as the first step towards conquering Livonia. In July, 1621, a Swedish fleet of 150 sail, with Gustavus and 14,000 men on board, sailed from Elfsnabb harbour; at Pernau the king was joined by Jakob De la Gardie with 5000 Finnish levies; and on August 13 Riga was invested, and, after a valiant defence, surrendered (September 15) to the Swedish king. On October 3 Mittau, the capital of the friendly duchy of Courland, was occupied; and then the advanced season compelled Gustavus to quarter his troops for the winter in the conquered districts. His brother, Duke Charles Philip, a youth of great promise, died of dysentery at Narva, on January 25, 1622, a week after the king's departure; indeed so great had been the ravages of sickness during the campaign of 1621 that the Swedish army had to be reinforced by no fewer than 10,000 men, and even then it could do but little.

A truce was thereupon concluded, and hostilities were suspended till the summer of 1625; when Gustavus, having reorganised and greatly strengthened his army, sailed first to South Livonia, where he took the fortress of Kokenhausen, invaded Lithuania, and captured the fortress of Birse. Meanwhile his generals, Jakob De la Gardie and Gustavus Horn, had subdued the whole of eastern Livonia up to the river Ewst, including Dorpat; but the Ewst was to mark the limit of the Swedish advance; and Horn, who attempted to take Dünaburg, was badly beaten beneath the walls of that fortress by Gonsiewski. During the winter the Swedish host suffered terribly from want of food, the close surveillance of three small Polish armies, and the incursions of the Cossacks. Early in January, 1626, the king crossed the frozen Dwina, and attacked the nearest Polish camp at Wallhof, scattering the whole army, after slaying a fifth part of it without losing a single man himself, and capturing six hundred waggons of provisions and military stores. This victory, remarkable

besides as Gustavus's first pitched battle, completed the conquest of Livonia.

As, however, it became every year more difficult to support an army in the Dwina district, Gustavus now resolved to transfer the war to the Prussian provinces of Poland with a view to securing the control of the Vistula, as he had already secured the control of the Dwina, hoping that the great Protestant city of Dantzig and the Protestant Elector of Brandenburg, George William, who held East Prussia as a fief from Poland, would assist him in his enterprise against a Catholic state. But Dantzig derived her enormous wealth mainly from her toll-free trade with her nominal suzerain Poland, besides enjoying the most absolute religious and political liberty. She therefore could only lose by an alliance with a military monarchy like Sweden. George William of Brandenburg seemed, at first sight, a much more likely ally. He was Gustavus's brother-in-law; and, to say nothing of their common Protestantism, the political interests of the little aspiring North German state seemed to be identical with those of Sweden. But Sweden, not yet a great power, though in the way to become one, was far away over the sea, while close at hand stood George William's suzerain, King Sigismund, who threatened to deprive his vassal of his fief if he entered into any negotiations with the Swedish usurper. These threats had a decisive influence upon the naturally cautious George William, and made him "the historical type of political instability."

At the end of June, 1626, the Swedish fleet, with 14,000 men on board, anchored in front of the chain of sand-dunes which separates the Frische Haff from the Baltic. In the narrow inlet leading into the Haff lay Pillau, the only Baltic harbour then accessible to ships of war, from whence, with a fleet commanding the principal arm of the Vistula, near Dantzig, tolls could be levied on the whole trade of Prussia. The possession of this important point was indispensable to

the success of Gustavus's enterprise ; but unfortunately, lying as it did in East Prussia, it belonged to Brandenburg, a friendly power. Gustavus told the commandant that he did not want a handful of his brother-in-law's land, but he must provisionally hold the little place among the dunes so "to have his back free." There could be no question of resistance ; Pillau was at once occupied ; tolls were forthwith levied there ; and Königsberg, shortly afterwards, was scared into an unconditional neutrality. To all the representations of the Elector Gustavus was absolutely deaf. "Don't talk to me of your treaty with Poland," said he ; "in war time all treaties are dumb." July was employed in conquering the bishopric of Ermeland. The surrender of Elbing and Marienburg placed Gustavus in possession of the fertile and easily defensible delta of the Vistula, which he treated as a permanent conquest, making Axel Oxenstjerna its first governor-general. Communications between Dantzic and the sea were cut off by the erection of the first of Gustavus's famous entrenched camps at Dirchau ; but the mighty city-republic, relying on its position and its garrison of 7500 men, openly contested Gustavus's dominion of the Vistula. From the end of August, 1626, the city was blockaded, and in the meantime Polish irregulars, under the capable Stanislaus Koniecpolski, began to harass the Swedes.

But the object of the campaign, a convenient basis of operations, was already won ; and in October the king departed to Sweden to get reinforcements. He returned in May, 1627, with 7000 men, which raised his forces to 14,000, against which Koniecpolski could oppose only 9000. But the Polish general did wonders with his scanty resources, and defeated and scattered a large band of auxiliaries, whom Gustavus had hired in North Germany, as soon as they had crossed the border. Dantzic, too, defied all the efforts of the Swedes to capture her fortified outposts ; and Gustavus, in the course of the year, was twice dangerously wounded, and so disabled that he could never wear armour again.

During the winter of 1627-28, the States General, anxious for commercial reasons for the conclusion of the war, attempted to mediate between the belligerents, but in vain. Sigismund obstinately denied Gustavus the royal title; and Gustavus would not consent to a dishonourable peace. Moreover he had already taken two important steps which pledged him to plunge still further into the general European war. In the beginning of 1628 he had signed a treaty with Denmark for the common defence of the Baltic, and, shortly afterwards, he had sent Oxenstjerna with reinforcements to Stralsund, now hardly pressed by Wallenstein. Gustavus had made extensive preparations for the ensuing campaign. He brought back with him from Sweden reinforcements amounting to 12,000 men, and took the field with 33,000. But once again, though far outnumbered, and ill-supported by his own government, Koniecpolski showed himself a superior strategist. He entrenched himself so impregnably at Mewe that the king did not venture to attack him, but led his army against Dantzig, whose fleet he all but annihilated at Weichselmünde. But now torrential rains made further operations impossible. Only at the beginning of August was Gustavus able to move against Poland proper; and again Koniecpolski frustrated his efforts by entrenching himself impregnably at Gaudenz, and holding the whole Swedish army at bay for six weeks. Finally, on September 10, Gustavus broke up his camp and returned to Prussia; the whole autumn campaign had proved a failure and cost him 5000 men.

During the ensuing campaign of 1629, Gustavus had to contend against the combined forces of Koniecpolski and an auxiliary corps of 10,000 Wallenstein mercenaries under Johan von Arnim. The Polish commander now showed the Swedes what he could do with adequate forces. At Stuhm, on June 29, in a rearguard action, he defeated Gustavus, who lost most of his artillery and narrowly escaped capture. A more vigorous prosecution of the war might now have rid

the Republic of her troublesome northern enemy once for all ; but the Polish Sejm never grasped the significance of the situation, and, instead of following up their victory, they accepted the proffered mediation of England and France. The result was the conclusion of the six years' truce of Altmark, whereby Sweden was permitted to retain possession provisionally of her Livonian conquests together with Elbing, a considerable portion of the delta of the Vistula, Braunsberg in West, and Pillau and Memel in East Prussia. Still more important than these territorial acquisitions was the permission conceded to Gustavus of levying tolls at Pillau, Memel, Dantzig, Labiau, and Windau, from which he derived in 1629 alone no less than 500,000 rix-dollars, a sum equivalent to the whole of the extraordinary subsidies granted to him by the Riksdag. Thus Sweden held the control of all the principal trade routes of the Baltic up to the very confines of the *Reich* ; and the increment of revenue resulting from this commanding position was of material assistance to Gustavus in the still greater enterprise on which his heart and his ambition were now equally bent.

What were the motives which induced Gustavus Adolphus to intervene directly in the Thirty Years' War ? The king himself, in his correspondence with Axel Oxenstjerna, tells us plainly it was the fear lest the Emperor should acquire the Baltic ports and proceed to build up a sea-power dangerous to Scandinavia. For the same reason Gustavus rejected the chancellor's alternative plan of waging a simply defensive war against the Emperor by means of the fleet, with Stralsund as his base. He was convinced by the experience of Christian IV that the enemy's harbours could be wrested from them only by a successful offensive war on land ; and, while quite alive to the risks of such an enterprise in the face of two large armies, Tilly's and Wallenstein's, each of them larger than his own, he argued that the vast extent of territory, and the numerous garrisons which the enemy were obliged to maintain, more than

neutralised his numerical superiority. Moreover the Emperor's predominance was largely a matter of prestige; and a lost battle, Gustavus argued, "would make his affairs bad enough." Then, too, the Imperial commissioners at Lübeck had already placed him under the ban of the Empire; and as war was, in any case, inevitable, it was better, he contended, that the seat of it should be anywhere but in Sweden, whose long coast-line and numerous harbours made it very difficult to prevent invasion. Merely to blockade all the German ports with the Swedish fleet was equally impossible. The Swedish fleet was too weak for that: it would be safer to take and fortify the pick of them. In Germany itself, if once he got the upper hand, he trusted he would not find himself without resources. It is no enthusiastic crusader, but an anxious and far-seeing, if somewhat speculative statesman, who thus opens his mind to us. No doubt religious considerations largely influenced Gustavus. He had the deepest sympathy for his fellow-Protestants in Germany; he regarded them as God's peculiar people, himself as their divinely appointed deliverer; and the humble but sure expectation of God's extraordinary assistance in the good cause was a primary factor in all his calculations. But his first duty was to Sweden; and, naturally and rightly, he viewed the whole business from a predominantly Swedish point of view. Lutherans and Calvinists in Germany were to be delivered from a "soul-crushing tyranny," but they were to be delivered by a foreign if friendly power; and that power claimed as her reward the hegemony of Protestant Europe, and all the political privileges naturally belonging to that exalted position.

Throughout the years 1628-29 unceasing and elaborate preparations were made in Sweden for an adventure the like of which the world had never yet seen. A nation numbering a million and a half of souls was arming itself for a contest with the greatest military power in the world, whose armies, amounting at the lowest estimate to 150,000

men, were commanded by generals supposed to be unconquerable because they had never been conquered. When the war was resolved upon, the full effective strength of the Swedish army was but 50,000 men, though ultimately it was brought up to 76,000, while Axel Oxenstjerna subsequently raised an additional army in Prussia of about 20,000. In striking contrast with Christian IV, Gustavus had done everything in his power to minimise risks. He was not the man to think of taking the second step before he had taken the first. The jealousy of Holland, the anarchy of England, the haughtiness of France, had compelled him to abandon his original plan of a combination of the western powers against the house of Habsburg ; while the fears of the North German princes prevented the formation of any Protestant league. But the emissaries of the Swedish king had sought for allies so remote as the Khan of the Crimea, and the Cossack Republic on the Dnieper ; his diplomatic agents had thwarted the diplomatists of the Emperor at the Divan of the Sublime Porte ; and negotiations had even been entered into with the prince of Transylvania, the republic of Venice, and the Swiss cantons. But his chief reliance was upon his own country, and his own country did not fail him. The secret committee of the Riksdag granted him subsidies for three years in advance, on the sole condition that the war should, so far as possible, be conducted beyond the borders of Sweden ; the Swedish gentry furnished him with a staff of officers, men like Johan Banér, Lennart Torstensson, Åke Tott, Niels Brahe, Gustavus Horn, and Gustavus Vrangel, who were soon to be reckoned amongst the greatest captains of that or any other age ; while the hardy yeomen of Sweden and Finland formed the nucleus and the leaven of that international army which was gathering around his standard.

On May 19, 1630, Gustavus solemnly took leave of the Estates of the realm assembled at Stockholm. He appeared before them holding in his arms his only child and heir, the little Princess Christina, then in her fourth year, and tenderly

committed her to the care of his loyal and devoted people. Gustavus seems to have had a foreboding that he should never see Sweden again. "It generally happens," he said with his usual homely simplicity, "that the pitcher goes so often to the well that at last it breaks; and so, at last, it may befall me, inasmuch as I who have so many times shed my blood for the welfare of Sweden, and hitherto, through God's gracious protection, have been spared, must at last give up [my spirit]." Then, conscious that his motives might be misinterpreted, he solemnly took the Estates to witness, as he stood there, "in the sight of the Almighty," that he had begun hostilities "out of no lust for war, as many will certainly devise and imagine," but in self-defence and to deliver his fellow-Christians from oppression. Finally he gave the Estates his benediction, and commended them to God's protection. When he ceased speaking there were tears in every eye, but the predominant feeling was one of hope and confidence as became men embarking on a great enterprise with high resolutions.

On June 17, 1630, the Swedish fleet set sail; on Midsummer Day it cast anchor off Cape Perd on the isle of Rügen; and two days later the whole army, 16,000 strong, was disembarked at Peenemünde. Gustavus's plan was to take possession of the mouths of the Oder Haff, and, resting upon Stralsund in the west and Prussia in the east, penetrate into Germany. In those days rivers were, what railways now are, the great military routes; and Gustavus's German war was a war waged along river lines. The opening campaign was to be fought along the line of the Oder. After fortifying Christian IV's trenches at Peenemünde, Gustavus compelled Bogislav IV, duke of Pomerania, to become his ally. Stettin, the capital of Pomerania, and the key of the Oder line, was the most important strategic point in the immediate theatre of the war; and its possession was therefore indispensable to Gustavus. Bogislav, already allied with Wallenstein, preferred to remain neutral.

But, in the middle of July, a Swedish fleet and army appeared before Stettin ; the inhabitants received "the gentle, gracious master" in the simple grey military uniform as a friend and deliverer; and Bogislav reluctantly placed his capital and his duchy at the absolute disposal of the Swedish king. After converting Stettin into a first-class fortress and a base for further operations, Gustavus proceeded to clear Pomerania of the piebald Imperial host composed of every nationality under heaven, and officered by Italians, Irishmen, Bohemians, Croats, Danes, Spaniards, and Walloons. Gustavus's army has often been described by German historians as an army of foreign invaders: in reality it was far more truly Teutonic than the official defenders of Germany at that period. Conti, the Imperialist commander-in-chief, soon showed that he had not learnt the art of war under Wallenstein in vain. Posting his lieutenant, Savelli, at Peene to cut off the Swedes' communications with Stralsund, he established himself in two impregnable camps at Garz and Greiffenhagen on Oder, and compelled Gustavus to stand on the defensive. Thus the king had driven a wedge between the various Imperialist divisions, but could move no further himself.

Still more serious than Gustavus's military difficulties were the political. Whatever the German people might have felt—and, whenever they could freely express their sentiments, they welcomed him gladly—the German princes, not one of whom could look beyond his petty personal interests, naturally regarded their would-be deliverer as a foreign intruder. Only those who had nothing to lose, fugitives and exiles, or the landless younger sons of princely houses, showed any disposition to join him. As to the two leading princes of North Germany, John George, Elector of Saxony, and George William, Elector of Brandenburg, the former most carefully avoided committing himself to anything resembling an alliance with Gustavus, while the latter, immediately after the occupation of Stettin, sent his ambassador, Wilmersdorf, to the king of

Sweden, to induce him to turn back, or, at least, go no further, at the same time offering his mediation with the Emperor. "What might not the Electors of Brandenburg and Saxony have accomplished!" cried Gustavus bitterly. "Would to God that we could nowadays find a Maurice of Saxony!"

Suddenly the hopes of Gustavus were revived by the news of two important and favourable events. The Emperor, yielding to the threats and the entreaties of the Kurfürstentag of Regensburg, and secretly but energetically worked upon by the League and its foreign supporters, dismissed Wallenstein August 13, 1630, and reduced his army to 60,000 men; while, almost simultaneously, Magdeburg, the greatest city of the Lower Saxon Circle, openly declared for the Swedish king. At last Gustavus had found a powerful and voluntary ally in Germany. From a strategical point of view, Magdeburg, as the strongest fortress of North Germany, was of the highest importance to him, commanding, as it did, the passage across the Elbe, for at that time there was no bridge over the river north of Magdeburg. It was, as Gustavus expressed it, a sally port for the invasion of south-western Germany, the territory of the Catholic League, where he recognised that the struggle must be fought out. Magdeburg undertook to hold the Elbe fords open for the king; and, in return for this essential service, Gustavus promised to protect the city at his own cost, and never abandon it. Unable to go to Magdeburg himself, he sent thither one of the most trustworthy of his German officers, Didrik von Falkenberg, to organise the defence and form a new Swedish army corps. Falkenberg arrived at Magdeburg in October, disguised as a Chapman, by which time the city was already closely invested by the Imperial troops.

Gustavus first proposed to relieve Magdeburg by way of Dömitz on Elbe, the chief fortress of Mecklenburg, after clearing the duchy of the Imperialists. The storms of autumn, which prevented the co-operation of the Swedish fleet, together with the superiority of the Imperialist generals in North

Germany, nullified this plan ; whereupon Gustavus attempted to open the Oder route to Magdeburg by attacking the Imperialist entrenched camps at Garz and Greiffenhagen in Pomerania. With 40,000 excellent troops at his disposal, opposed to the half-starving, half-naked remnants of Conti's host, this proved an easy task. Greiffenhagen was stormed on Christmas Eve, 1630, whereupon Garz was destroyed and abandoned by the Imperialists themselves, who retreated towards Frankfort on Oder, hotly pursued by the Swedes as far as Küstrin.

At the beginning of 1631 Gustavus's hands were strengthened by the conclusion of a definite alliance with France at Bärwalde, January 13. Richelieu, who at first had regarded Gustavus as a mere Scandinavian *condottiere*, who might be induced to fight the battles of France in Germany at so much a head, had recognised at last that the Swedish king was in a position to prescribe rather than accept conditions, and must, in every respect, be treated as an equal. The fruitless negotiations at Dresden and München, during the summer, had convinced the French diplomatist of the impossibility of uniting Protestants and Catholics against the Emperor ; whilst the subsequent reconciliation between the Emperor and the League necessitated a political counterpoise in North Germany which could only be found in the Swedes. The treaty was concluded for five years, its objects being to keep the northern seas open and restore the *status quo ante bellum* in Germany. France contracted to pay Sweden an annual subsidy of 400,000 rix-dollars ; and Gustavus undertook to maintain in Germany an army of 26,000 men. Richelieu's action was more than justified by the abortive issue of the Protestant congress at Leipsic, which met in February, 1631, under the presidency of the Saxon Elector George Frederick, to reconcile Lutherans and Calvinists, and form a middle party in Germany, but separated after a three months' discussion without coming to any conclusion.

But, while the German Protestants were "debating and

demonstrating," Gustavus was acting. On hearing that Tilly, at the head of 24,000 men, was advancing upon Frankfort on Oder to unite with Hannibal von Schaumburg, Gustavus broke up from Küstrin, and made a second attempt to relieve Magdeburg by way of Mecklenburg, capturing on his way the strong fortress of Demmin. Tilly at once quitted the line of the Oder to bar Gustavus's way to the Elbe, and this he succeeded in doing, for the king shut himself up in an entrenched camp at Schwedt on Oder, and remained there till March, when Tilly himself departed for Magdeburg, which had in the meantime been closely blockaded by Pappenheim. Gustavus thereupon advanced against the important fortress of Frankfort, which he took unexpectedly by storm on Palm Sunday afternoon, April 15, thus securing possession of the line of the Oder. Magdeburg now became the focus of the whole campaign: its immediate possession was equally indispensable to each of the combatants. Only with Magdeburg in his hands could Tilly hope to exclude Gustavus from southern and western Germany; while to Gustavus the city was not merely the key of the situation but his one faithful and courageous ally who must be delivered at all hazards. His royal word was pledged to Magdeburg: to relieve her was to him as much a matter of honour and conscience as of military and political expediency.

The city was now in extremities. The garrison was already living from hand to mouth; ammunition was running short; all the outworks had been abandoned. Courier after courier was sent to Gustavus by the despairing commandant. Unfortunately Gustavus's movements were hampered by the timidity of the Electors of Brandenburg and Saxony. Without their support and assistance it was impossible for him to march to the relief of the beleaguered city with an army but half the size of Tilly's; to have done so would have been to risk for the sake of a single town the whole future of German Protestantism. What he required of the Electors was a free passage through their

territories and the union of their forces with his; and till these objects were secured his hands were tied. But the Electors were deaf to all his entreaties; and Gustavus was forced to cut the diplomatic tangle with the sword. On May 14, 1631, he dictated at the gates of Berlin a treaty whereby the Elector of Brandenburg agreed to pay monthly subsidies for the support of the Swedish army, and surrender his two principal fortresses, Küstrin and Spandau, till Magdeburg had been relieved. But with the Elector of Saxony nothing could be done. He refused not only to co-operate with Gustavus, but even to permit him to cross the Elbe at Wittenberg, the nearest way to Magdeburg; and, as the Saxon army was numerically as large as the Swedish, Gustavus could not extort compliance. All that the king could do was solemnly to hold the Elector responsible for any harm that might befall Magdeburg, and take the one route still remaining open—the circuitous route by way of the Havel in a northerly direction. But by this time the fate of Magdeburg was already decided. On May 20, the same day on which John George had closed his gates to Gustavus, the most prosperous and populous city of North Germany had become a heap of smoking ruins. The cathedral and about one hundred houses alone escaped the flames. Unwillingly stormed by Tilly, who did what little he could to save the women and children from his barbarous hordes, the city was accidentally fired by some of Pappenheim's marauders; and a strong gale blowing at the time did the rest. Like Napoleon at Moscow, Tilly himself was the immediate loser by this unexpected catastrophe. Magdeburg was to have been a basis for further operations as well as a storehouse for his half-famished troops. Want and hunger compelled him, a fortnight after its fall, to retreat southwards in the direction of Thuringia.

Meanwhile Gustavus, still too weak to meet the foe in the open field, had entrenched himself at Werben, at the confluence of the Havel and Elbe, whence he could defy the superior forces of the Imperialists, and safely await the inevitable

accession of the Protestant princes. For the position of these princes was becoming every day more untenable. The Emperor had rejected their petitions, pronounced the Leipsic congress illegal, commanded them to disband their troops, and ordered the reinforcements returning from Italy, under Fürstenberg and Altringer, after the Peace of Chierasco (1631), to execute the sequestration decrees against the South German Protestants. Self-preservation, therefore, drove the German princes, one by one, to seek protection in the Swedish camp at Werben, especially after Tilly had made his abortive attacks upon it in the course of the autumn. Landgrave William of Hesse-Cassel led the way, and he was speedily followed by William and Bernard of Saxe-Weimar: all of these now entered the Swedish service. The Elector of Saxony still persisted in attempting to maintain an impossible neutrality; but, when the Emperor ordered Tilly to invade Saxony from the north, while Fürstenberg and Tiefenbach co-operated with him from the south and east, John George saw himself compelled either to abandon his lands to plunder, or implore Gustavus for assistance, and submit to his dictation. He chose the latter humiliation. A courier was instantly despatched to Gustavus; the Swedish and Saxon armies effected their junction at Düben; and on September 12 a treaty was signed between the king and the Elector, whereby the latter placed himself absolutely at the disposal of the former. Thus, at last, Gustavus's chief object was won. He was no longer a foreign intruder but the recognised leader of the Protestant party in Germany.

The war now assumed an altogether different character. Numerically equal to his opponents, Gustavus abandoned the fortified camp system, and took the open field. Events developed rapidly. On both sides it was recognised that a decisive action was at hand. Tilly, after combining with Fürstenberg, had ravaged Saxony up to Leipsic, which, warned by the fate of Magdeburg, opened its gates to him. But here his course was stayed, for, at a council of war held at Düben,

Gustavus decided to march against him forthwith. The septuagenarian Tilly would have avoided an engagement if possible; but his staff persuaded him to stand firm, and he awaited Gustavus on the wide plain of Breitenfeld north of Leipsic. The two armies encountered on September 17, 1631, the Imperialists numbering about 32,000, the combined Swedish-Saxon army about 41,000 men. The battle, which lasted from early morning to sunset, was most bitterly contested. The Saxon contingent, indeed, which was placed on the extreme left, with their Elector at their head, "took to their heels by companies" at the first onset of Fürstenberg's pikemen, dangerously exposing the Swedish left, which was saved from destruction only by a masterly manœuvre of Gustavus Horn, who reformed his whole front in the heat of the engagement. On the Swedish right the impetuous charge of Pappenheim's 5000 cavalry was arrested by the steady fire of the Swedish and Finnish regiments; and, on attempting a flank movement, Pappenheim was seven times repulsed and finally scattered by Johan Banér. The battle was decided by the king capturing Tilly's artillery and turning it against the Spanish tertiaries which composed his centre. These unconquerable battalions stood like a wall till sunset, when they formed a square round their wounded general and marched unbroken from the battlefield. But an army Tilly no longer possessed. No fewer than 7000 of the Imperialists fell on the field of battle; 5000 prisoners were incorporated with the Swedish army; several thousands of stragglers were massacred by the country-folk. The booty captured was immense, and included the military chest of the League, which was plundered systematically.

The first battle of Breitenfeld marks a turning-point in the history of the Thirty Years' War. It settled the fate of the Restitution Edict, and dissipated, once for all, the dream of a united Catholic Germany. Protestantism regained once more the confidence it had lost during the reverses of the last ten years; and its future existence in the Empire was assured. On

contemporaries the victory produced an overwhelming impression. At Vienna pious Catholics could not at first believe that "God had all at once turned Lutheran." To Gustavus it was the fulfilment of his most audacious hopes: the only question now was, In what way should he utilise his advantage? Should he invade the Austrian crown-lands, and dictate peace to Ferdinand II at the gates of Vienna? or should he pursue Tilly westwards and crush the League at its own hearth and home? The matter was debated at a council of war held at Halle a week after the battle. Axel Oxenstjerna and Gustavus Horn were for the first alternative, but Gustavus decided in favour of the second. His decision has been greatly blamed. Oxenstjerna himself, nineteen years later, expressed his deep regret, in full senate, at this the one great mistake of his great master; and more than one modern historian has argued that, if Gustavus had done in 1631 what Napoleon did in 1805 and 1809, there would have been a Fifteen instead of a Thirty Years' War. But, on the other hand, it should be borne in mind that in the days of Gustavus Vienna was by no means so essential to the existence of the Habsburg monarchy as it was in the days of Napoleon; and even Gustavus could not afford to allow so dangerous an opponent as Tilly time to recover himself. The Saxon army, with such a leader as the Saxon Elector, would have been no match for the veteran Walloon; and Gustavus, with rare diplomatic sagacity, had already decided upon sending John George against the hereditary estates of the Emperor, and thus hopelessly compromising him with the court of Vienna, while he himself set out for the Rhine lands at the head of his victorious army. His march was a triumphal progress. Joyfully welcomed as a deliverer by all the Protestant cities, he met with no resistance till he came to Marienberg on Main, which was taken by storm and yielded such an enormous booty that the Swedish soldiers measured their gold by the hatful. After resting a whole month in the rich Würzburg district, Gustavus continued his onward march

"to conjoin the Main with the Rhine," as he expressed it. Frankfort on Main opened her gates at the first threat; and the Swedish host marched through. At Oppenheim Gustavus crossed the Rhine, and on December 20 he entered Mainz in triumph, after clearing the Palatinate of its Spanish garrisons. Simultaneously the Elector of Saxony and Arnim invaded Bohemia, and in the beginning of November occupied Prag. The front of the combined Protestant armies now extended from the Rhine to the Moldau.

At Mainz, the most important strategical position in western Germany, Gustavus established his winter quarters in an entrenched camp capable of holding 20,000 men. His position was unprecedented and extraordinary, and has been well compared to that of Napoleon at Erfurt. All the Protestant princes and nobles of Germany, all the leading diplomatists of Europe, flocked to the court of the Swedish king, in "the golden city on the Rhine." His plan was to form a "Corpus Evangelicorum," or Union of all the Protestant princes, under the protection and leadership of Sweden, which was to be guaranteed the possession of the German Baltic coast, to complete that Baltic empire which he regarded as the basis of her future stability. France, as much surprised by the Swedish victories of 1631 as she was to be by the Prussian victories in 1866, and alarmed for her own influence in Germany, now attempted to bring about an understanding between Gustavus and the Catholic League of southern Germany, with which she was also allied; but, when Gustavus refused to surrender his conquests until the princes of the League had disarmed, Maximilian of Bavaria, the leader of the League, broke off the negotiations and renewed his alliance with the Emperor. This of itself was tantamount to a declaration of war.

As the most effectual means of bringing about the general peace he so earnestly desired, Gustavus now proposed to take the field with an overwhelming numerical superiority. He

never, indeed, reached his proposed maximum of 200,000; yet so numerous were the newly enlisted recruits that the Swedish nucleus of his forces dwindled down to a fifth; and, besides the royal army, he could form three independent army corps under Gustavus Horn, Johan Banér, and Åke Tott, to say nothing of his co-operating German auxiliaries. The signal for Gustavus to break up from the Rhine was the sudden advance of Tilly from the Danube against Gustavus Horn, whom he compelled to evacuate the bishopric of Bamberg. Proceeding by way of Frankfort to Nürnberg, where he was received enthusiastically, Gustavus pursued Tilly into Bavaria, forced the passage of the Danube at Donauwörth and the passage of the Lech in the face of Tilly's strongly entrenched camp at Rain, and pursued the flying host to the fortress of Ingolstadt, where Tilly died of his wounds a fortnight later. Turning aside from Ingolstadt, Gustavus liberated and garrisoned the long-oppressed Protestant cities of Augsburg and Ulm, and, thence proceeding into Bavaria, occupied München in May, 1632. He was now at the height of his power; and Germany lay at his feet. His dominion extended from the Alps to the Arctic Ocean. The Alpine passes were in his hands. Italy was trembling at the prospect of another northern invasion. But, while still in Bavaria, the clouds which were to eclipse his glory had already appeared upon the horizon.

After the collapse of Tilly and the League, the Emperor, in his extremity, had appealed once more to the disgraced Wallenstein to save him; and once more Wallenstein had stamped an army out of the earth. In the very week in which Gustavus had entered München, the great dictator had chased John George from Prag and manœuvred the Saxons out of Bohemia. Then, armed as he was with plenipotentiary powers, both military and political, he offered the Elector of Saxony peace on his own terms. Gustavus suddenly saw himself exposed to unheard-of peril. He saw not only his southern plan of campaign annihilated, but his most important and most

unstable ally exposed to an almost irresistible temptation. If Tilly had made John George such an offer as Wallenstein was now empowered to make, the Elector would never have become Gustavus's ally: would he remain Gustavus's ally now? Hastily quitting his quarters in Upper Swabia, whither he had gone to crush a dangerous Catholic rising, Gustavus hastened towards Nürnberg on his way to Saxony, but, finding that Wallenstein and Maximilian of Bavaria had united their forces, which now amounted to 60,000 men, to which, for the moment, he could oppose only 18,000, he was constrained, for his own safety as well as to save Nürnberg from the fate of Magdeburg, to abandon the attempt to reach Saxony and remain where he was. Both armies, therefore, confronted each other at Nürnberg, whose colossal walls and bastions furnished Gustavus with a point of support of the first order. He quickly converted the town into an entrenched and fortified camp, from the walls and bastions of which 300 cannon gaped upon the enemy. Wallenstein followed the king's example, and entrenched himself on the western bank of the Redwitz in a camp twelve English miles in circumference, including in its immense sweep rivers, towns, and forests. His object was to pin Gustavus fast to Nürnberg and cut off his retreat northwards. Throughout July and August the two armies faced each other immovably, voluntarily exposing themselves to all the hardships of a regular siege in order to tire each other out. At last, when the distress in Nürnberg had grown so great that people died of hunger in the streets, Gustavus, who had in the meantime summoned to him the army corps of Oxenstjerna, Gustavus Horn, Banér, and the dukes of Saxe-Weimar, led out his forces and offered battle, which Wallenstein obstinately declined. A fortnight later, after an unsuccessful attempt on August 24 to storm Alte Veste, the key of Wallenstein's position, the Swedish host retreated southwards.

For the second time Gustavus had plainly been out-maneuvred. He intended to draw Wallenstein after him by

threatening the Austrian crown-lands; but again Wallenstein showed his superiority as a strategist by invading Saxony with the intention of collecting the whole Imperial army into another entrenched camp on the Elbe. Seeing his line of retreat again menaced, Gustavus immediately returned, by forced marches, from the Danube to the Elbe, crossed the Thüringerwald on the night of October 22 and 23, and, after uniting with Bernard of Weimar, proceeded to Erfurt, where he saw his consort, Maria Eleonora, for the last time. Wallenstein, meantime, after savagely devastating Saxony, to force the Elector to abandon his alliance with the Swedes, had sent Pappenheim away to the Rhine with 10,000 men, and prepared to go into winter quarters at Lützen, under the impression that Gustavus was about to do the same. The king, thereupon, resolved to surprise his enemy, and hastened in full battle array, by way of Weissenfels, towards Lützen. On the afternoon of November 5 he overtook Wallenstein as he was crossing the Rippach; and a rearguard action, favourable to the Swedes, ensued. Indeed, but for nightfall, the scattered forces of the duke of Friedland might have been routed. During the night, however, Wallenstein succeeded in collecting and marshalling his forces, and sent an express to call back Pappenheim.

On November 6, at daybreak, while an autumn mist still lay over the field, the battle began. The king, as usual, commanded the Swedish right wing, and began the attack simultaneously with Niels Brahe, the only Swedish general present. It was obviously Gustavus's plan to drive Wallenstein away from the Leipsic road, north of which he had posted himself, and thus, in case of success, to isolate, and subsequently, with the aid of the Saxons in the Elbe fortresses, annihilate him. The king succeeded in driving the enemy from the trenches and capturing his cannon; but Niels Brahe was less fortunate, and fell, mortally wounded. The same fate befell Pappenheim, the Murat of the Thirty Years' War, as, with his usual *élan*, he flung himself upon the Swedes at the head of his horsemen.

What happened after that is mere conjecture, for a thick mist now obscured the autumn sun ; and the battle became a colossal *mélée*, the details of which are indistinguishable. It was in the midst of that awful obscurity that Gustavus met his death—how or where is not absolutely certain ; but it seems that he lost his way in the darkness as he was leading the Småland horse to the assistance of his infantry, and was despatched, as he lay severely wounded on the ground, by a hostile horseman. The sudden appearance of his riderless steed first told the Swedes that their leader was dead, and inspired them forthwith with a furious lust for vengeance which carried everything before it, and made Lützen one of the bloodiest battles of the Thirty Years' War. Finally Wallenstein was compelled to evacuate the battlefield and retreat southwards ; but the victors were too much exhausted to pursue him.

For a moment Sweden reeled beneath the shock of this terrible catastrophe. In the flower of his age and vigour—he was but thirty-eight—the great monarch had been cut off ; and his successor was a girl six years old. The Emperor and the Catholics openly rejoiced ; Sweden's friends, nay Sweden's own statesmen, feared that Gustavus's work had finished with him. But it was only for a moment. The world was quickly to perceive that the hero-king had bequeathed to his country not only a difficult task, but also the men capable of performing it. Foremost among these illustrious pupils was the chancellor Axel Oxenstjerna. Indispensable even while Gustavus was still alive, all eyes turned instinctively towards him now that Gustavus was dead. He did not seek preeminence ; it was thrust upon him by the unanimous voice of his country. Overwhelmed as he was personally by the great calamity, not for an instant did he lose his presence of mind. Recognising that his proper place was in Germany, to keep Sweden's allies in heart and control Sweden's foreign policy, all the threads of which were in his hands, he exhorted the government at home to be steadfast and united. The news of the king's death,

which reached Sweden a month after the event, naturally caused the utmost consternation ; but it also evoked a noble outburst of courageous public spirit, and a determination "to pursue the war against the Emperor and all his adherents, till the policy of his late Majesty of blessed memory hath been consummated, and a sure peace obtained." The Råd thereupon appointed the chancellor "legate-plenipotentiary of the Swedish crown in the Roman Empire and with all our armies," and summoned a Riksdag, which (February 1, 1633) did homage to the child queen and appointed the five great officers of state *ad interim* regents. A second Riksdag assembled in June, 1634, and sanctioned a new constitution (July 29), which gave Sweden a strong and well-ordered administration with its centre in the crown and Råd, and its executive distributed among the *Kollegier* or departments of state. But the constant and indispensable adviser of the home government was the absent chancellor ; every novel or difficult point was at once submitted to and generally decided by him ; and for the next twelve years he was undoubtedly the real ruler of Sweden.

Abroad in Germany the urgent difficulties of a situation, always hovering on the verge of the desperate, taxed even his genius and courage to the uttermost. It is difficult to admire enough the unshakeable firmness, the many-sided, all-sufficing ability of Axel Oxenstjerna at this crisis, which made him the one great principle of cohesion amidst a score of jarring wills and contrary ambitions, ready at the first stroke of misfortune to fly asunder. To him both warriors and statesmen invariably appealed as their natural and infallible arbiter. Less original but more sagacious than the king, he had a firmer grasp of the realities of the situation. Gustavus would not only have magnified Sweden, he would have transformed the German Empire. Oxenstjerna wisely abandoned these vaulting ambitions. His country's welfare was his sole object. All his efforts were directed towards procuring for the

Swedish Crown adequate compensation for its sacrifices; and he worked for this object with a patience, a tenacity, a disinterestedness which extorted the admiration of friends and foes alike. Richelieu, baffled by an astuteness superior to his own, declared that the Swedish chancellor was "an inexhaustible source of well-matured counsels." Mazarin said that if all the diplomatists of Europe were in a boat together, they would unhesitatingly entrust the rudder to Oxenstjerna. It was a fortunate thing for Sweden that her destinies, at the crisis, were in the hands of so great a statesman.

The situation was already sufficiently alarming. The Swedish armies held, it is true, the best half of Germany; but they were composed, for the most part, of foreign mercenaries, and the differences between the Swedish generals and their confederates, the German princes, threatened to burst into open discord now that the restraining presence of the great king was withdrawn. Moreover a continuation of the war demanded fresh sacrifices, which the Riksdag was unable or unwilling to make. It was only the audacious firmness of the Swedish chancellor which succeeded in saving appearances and sustaining Sweden's newly won reputation as a great power. Few but himself perceived on what flimsy foundations it rested. His first act was to summon a meeting of the representatives of sixty South German states at Heilbronn (March, 1633), which resulted in the formation on April 23 of the so-called Evangelical Union, with Oxenstjerna himself as its director. The Union was to raise and maintain another army in South Germany, in the Protestant interest. A subsequent most dangerous mutiny of the officers of the Swedish army was appeased by the distribution of fiefs in Germany, under the Swedish Crown, to the value of about 5,000,000 rix-dollars. Simple to austerity in his own tastes, the Swedish chancellor recognised the political necessity of impressing his allies and confederates by an almost regal show of dignity; and at the abortive congress held at Frankfort in March, 1634, for

the purpose of forming a union of all the German Protestants, Oxenstjerna appeared in a carriage drawn by six horses, with German princes attending him on foot.

Not the least of Oxenstjerna's many cares was the supreme direction of Sweden's numerous armies in Germany, on the Weser and the Upper Rhine, in Swabia and Silesia, amounting together to about 120,000 men. The war at this period, owing to the wilful inaction of Wallenstein, a difficulty overcome by his assassination (Feb. 25, 1634), was conducted slackly and with varying success. In June, 1633, the Swedes, by the victory of Oldendorf, cleared Westphalia of the Imperialists; but, on Sept. 6, 1634, a terrible disaster befell them at Nördlingen, where the army of Gustavus Horn and Bernard of Saxe-Weimar was virtually wiped out by the new Imperialist commander-in-chief, Gallas, losing 6000 killed and wounded and 6000 prisoners.

Even more serious than the military were the moral and political consequences of this disaster. The nimbus of invincibility with which the arms of Sweden had hitherto been invested instantly vanished; and both foes and confederates ventured to treat her as they had never treated her before. The Elector of Saxony at once took the opportunity of re-opening negotiations with the Emperor, and concluded a separate peace with him at Prag (May, 1635). By the end of the same year Hesse-Cassel was Sweden's sole remaining ally in North Germany, while Poland and Denmark simultaneously assumed a threatening attitude. In a fit of panic, the Swedish home government, against the express advice of the indignant chancellor, bought a twenty-six years' truce (Treaty of Stuhmsdorf, Sept. 12, 1635) with Poland, by relinquishing, at this very time when they were most wanted, the Prussian tolls, secured by Gustavus Adolphus in the truce of Altmark six years before—tolls nine times as lucrative as all the Swedish and Finnish tolls put together. Isolated amidst failing friends and active foes, Oxenstjerna sought to gain time

by cautiously opening negotiations for a closer alliance with France. Well aware that Richelieu needed the Swedish armies as much as he himself needed French money, he resolutely refused to bind his hands in the future for the sake of some slight present relief, though he went all the way to Compiègne personally to meet Louis XIII and Richelieu, and was received there with the utmost distinction, Louis XIII even addressing him as "mon cousin." A fresh subsidy treaty with France, signed at Wismar in 1636, meanwhile relieved his temporary pecuniary embarrassments; and presently the good sword of Johan Banér somewhat retrieved the military prestige of Sweden.

Appointed commander-in-chief by Oxenstjerna after the rout of Nördlingen, and finding South Germany hopelessly lost, Banér bent all his efforts to reestablish the influence of Sweden in the north. After quelling a dangerous mutiny in the long-disorganised army, and receiving reinforcements, he invaded Saxony, whose weathercock Elector, now the ally of the Emperor, was threatening Pomerania. This attack recalled him to the defence of his own territories; and on Oct. 4, 1636, with only 16,000 men, Banér routed the Saxon army, 23,000 strong, at Wittstock, compelling them to retreat with the loss of 7000 men. This victory obliterated the impression of the Nördlingen disaster, and restored the supremacy of the Swedes in northern Germany. But since the Peace of Prag the war had entirely changed its character. Religious questions had fallen into the background; and the intervening powers, France and Sweden, now only aimed at obtaining an adequate compensation for their past sacrifices, so as to be able to withdraw honourably from the contest. But so many important interests were involved, and the Protestants were so hopelessly divided, that peace seemed to be further off than ever. Moreover the victory of Wittstock gave the Swedes only a temporary respite. Banér was too weak to follow up his success; and the Imperial forces were concen-

trated from all parts of Germany to crush the victor, whose position soon became extremely critical. He was beleaguered on all sides by hostile armies; and only if he succeeded in breaking through the iron circle enclosing him ever more narrowly was a more durable triumph conceivable.

In mid-winter Banér took Erfurt, laid siege to Leipsic, and was about to storm it (a breach had already been opened) when, under pressure from the combined Imperial forces, he was obliged to entrench himself within a fortified camp at Torgau. Thence, for four months, he defied the enemy's fourfold larger army, and lived on the surrounding country. Meanwhile his colleague, Gustavus Vrangel, after capturing Frankfort and Berlin from the now hostile Elector of Brandenburg, was compelled by Marazini's superior forces to fall back into Pomerania. Thus everywhere it was only with the utmost difficulty that the Swedes could keep the enemy at bay. In June, 1637, Banér at last quitted Torgau for fear of being cut off by four Imperialist armies advancing simultaneously against him from the north, west, south, and south-east. With only 14,000 to oppose to 60,000, he first attempted to fight his way back to Pomerania and there join Vrangel. He crossed the Elbe and Oder without opposition, and was preparing to cross the Warthe also at Landsberg, when he suddenly encountered the combined forces of Gallas and Marazini, who had cut him off by taking the shorter route. The little Swedish army, caught between the rivers Oder and Warthe, in the face of overwhelming numbers, now seemed hopelessly lost. But Banér did not lose his head. Outwitting the enemy by feigning a retreat into Poland, he suddenly doubled back, crossed the Oder without losing a man, joined Vrangel, and was saved. All Europe, expecting his imminent destruction, was amazed by such a combination of luck and audacity. After this masterly retreat, one of the most brilliant exploits in the military history of Sweden—Banér himself used to say of it that Gallas had got him into the sack but forgotten to pull the

strings—the Swedish general was entrusted with the defence of Pomerania, now Sweden's last possession on German soil. Driven back to the sea with an exhausted, famished army, constantly harassed by vastly superior forces, Banér nevertheless doggedly defended his dangerous post of honour all through the winter of 1637 and the spring of 1638, till Gallas's army, worn out by want and sickness, was compelled to retire, whereupon Banér followed close upon his heels and established himself in Mecklenburg.

Never had the position of Sweden been so desperate as during these two years. Her material resources seemed exhausted; her military resources were reduced to a single army corps. But Banér's iron grip upon Pomerania never once relaxed; and in the meantime the crisis passed away. Henceforward Sweden, as a military power, was safe; very shortly she was to be triumphant. Encouraging signs of the growing exhaustion of the Imperialists were also not wanting. Moreover, under pressure from the chancellor, the Swedish Estates made a supreme effort and again opened their purses; fresh subsidies were simultaneously obtained from France; and Banér, provided at last with adequate reinforcements, was able to assume the offensive. In the winter of 1638 he quitted his quarters in Mecklenburg, advanced to Meissen, and in the spring of 1639 defeated the Imperialists in a pitched battle at Chemnitz. Then, after advancing to the gates of Prag, he turned westwards, drove Hatzfeld before him into Franconia, and, returning to Bohemia, went into winter quarters there and sucked the country dry. For the first time the Habsburg crown-lands were to feel the full burden of the war. Nor was this all. Banér's victories enabled the French armies simultaneously to advance to the Rhine, conquer Elsass, and invade Swabia; and in May, 1640, a French army corps, under Guébriant, united with Banér's forces at Erfurt, so that the Swedish commander was now at the head of 36,000 men. In January, 1641, he suddenly appeared before Regensburg.

where the Emperor and the Reichstag were assembled, only a sudden thaw, which flooded the Danube, saving them from falling into his hands. The desertion of the Weimar princes, and the rapid rallying of all the Imperialist forces, compelled him, however, to hurry back towards Saxony, with the enemy hard upon his heels. Thence he directed his march northwards to Halberstadt, where, on May 10, 1641, Sweden's greatest general died of exhaustion in his forty-fifth year.

His successor, Lennart Torstensson, found the long-suffering army in an acute state of mutiny and misery; but his authority and firmness speedily restored order, and he was destined to lead them to even greater feats of arms than those of Banér. But it was Banér who had borne all the burden and heat of the day; it was his victories which had broken the strength of the Imperialists and made his successor's triumphs comparatively easy. Moreover the political situation of Sweden had now distinctly improved. Saxony, after the defeats of Wittstock and Chemnitz, was powerless; the new Elector of Brandenburg, Frederick William, who succeeded his father in 1641, had concluded a truce with Sweden; and in 1638 the subsidy treaty with France had been renewed. After reorganising his army in its new quarters in the Altmark, Torstensson, in the spring of 1642, invaded Silesia, stormed the fortress of Gross-Glogau, defeated the Imperialists at Scheidnitz, and captured that fortress together with Olmütz. Too weak to press on to Vienna, he prudently retraced his steps, taking the Oder fortresses of Kosel and Oppeln on his way, and on Nov. 2, 1642, forced the Imperialists to fight the second battle of Breitenfeld under unfavourable conditions, defeating them with a loss of 5000 killed and wounded and 4500 prisoners. A month later Leipsic surrendered. The victory of Breitenfeld completely reestablished the military supremacy of Sweden, which she had lost since the defeat of Nördlingen. Thenceforth, to the end of the war, she was to be the aggressor, while the Emperor could, only with the utmost

difficulty, defend even his hereditary lands. In the spring of 1643 Torstensson again invaded Moravia and relieved Olmütz. He was projecting an advance upon Vienna when, at the command of Oxenstjerna, he set off for the other end of Europe to execute the chancellor's designs against Denmark, and accomplished the brilliant feat of arms which extorted the humiliating Peace of Brömsebro from Christian IV (pp. 171-174). Henceforth, for the next twenty-five years, Sweden was justly regarded as the greatest military power in Europe.

It now remains for us to cast a glance at what was not the least difficult of the Swedish chancellor's manifold cares—his domestic administration.

During his absence in Germany the policy of the other regents had often been vacillating to the verge of cowardice; but on his return all branches of the administration awoke to new life. This is especially observable in the attitude of the government towards the Estates of the realm. The chancellor, a born aristocrat, with all the virtues but some of the prejudices of his class at its best, distrusted popular government, especially during the German war, which was a heavy drain upon the limited resources of a poor country. He especially doubted the expediency of consulting the Estates too often on questions of foreign policy, and he preferred to negotiate with the representatives of the various provinces through carefully selected delegates, local assemblies being, in his opinion, more manageable than Riksdags. Yet he never ruled over the heads of the people as the contemporary French ambassador at Stockholm more than once suggested. During the ten years of his administration he summoned no fewer than five Riksdags; and on every occasion his authority proved amply sufficient to quell the impatient murmurings of the Estates at the grievousness of the public burdens. It is undeniable that Oxenstjerna somewhat favoured his own order at the expense of the lower Estates; and, while the by no means unreasonable complaints of the peasant deputies were some-

times severely rebuked as savouring of sedition, the gentry had their privileges not only confirmed but increased. Yet, though the chancellor occasionally carried through economical questions with a very high hand, he invariably took the opinion of the Estates in all important matters. The whole administration, moreover, assumed a more stable and regular character than it had ever had before. Oxenstjerna always presided at the frequent meetings of the Råd; his strong hand and watchful eye influenced every branch of the administration; and anything like slackness, disorder, or venality was impossible during his sway. Many useful reforms, too, were inaugurated. A committee of experienced jurists was appointed to improve and simplify the course of legal procedure; trade and industry, especially the fabrication of iron and copper wire, were vigorously promoted and flourished exceedingly so long as Sweden held control of the estuaries of all the principal rivers of Germany. The regular army was reorganised and raised to 40,000 men, an enormous force for a nation with a population of only 1,500,000; while the fleet in 1640 consisted of no fewer than forty men-of-war and forty galleys with 1300 guns, besides the *skärgårdsflotta*, or skerry-flotilla of 150 galleys for special service among the fiords of Sweden and Finland. Despite the inevitable jealousy of his numerous personal and political enemies, the authority of the great chancellor to the very end of the queen's minority continued undiminished. His crowning work was the Peace of Brömsebro, for which the young Queen Christina promptly rewarded him with a countship and the rich estate of Södra Möra. But the day of his supremacy was now over. A new era had begun in which the grey-haired statesman was to take a lower place.

CHAPTER IX.

SWEDEN AS AN IMPERIAL POWER, 1644-1660.

CHRISTINA, who inherited her father's sceptre in her eighteenth year (Dec. 8, 1644), seemed born to rule a great Empire. From the moment when she took her seat at the head of the council-board she impressed her veteran counsellors with the conviction of her superior genius. In many things she resembled her still revered father. She possessed his blonde hair, ample forehead, hooked nose, and large, blue eyes. Like him she was naturally eloquent, acute, provident, courageous, energetic, equally devoted to art and science, and infinitely more learned. With an astounding memory, a lively curiosity, and quick apprehension, her love of knowledge knew no bounds. She would rise at five in the morning, to converse for a couple of hours with Descartes in her library; and she delighted to listen to the disputationes of Vossius, Salmasius, and Schefferus, all of them her *protégés* and pensioners. Her collection of books was renowned throughout Europe. Latin she had thoroughly mastered; the Greek classics she could read in the original; French and Italian she spoke better than her mother-tongue; while astronomy and mathematics were her favourite recreations. Yet she was much more of an Amazon than a pedant. Athletic exercises irresistibly appealed to her. In all Sweden there was not a more skilful hunter or a more daring rider; she could remain in the saddle for ten hours at

a time without fatigue. Indeed her whole temperament was masculine rather than feminine. Axel Oxenstjerna himself said of her when she was only fifteen, "Her Majesty is not like women-folk, but is stout-hearted and of a good understanding, so that if her Majesty be not corrupted we have good hopes of her."

Unfortunately these brilliant and commanding qualities were vitiated by a strange combination of defects generally considered incompatible: a cold callousness and a hot, imperious temper. It is hardly too much to say that Christina was, perhaps, the most heartless sovereign who ever sat upon a throne. Other monarchs have been as selfish, but the most egoistical of them have at least loved someone or something. Christina seems to have cared for absolutely nobody but herself. Her own sex she hated and despised with an intensity which was scarcely sane; yet her pride—pride of intellect even more than pride of station—revolted at the idea of affectionate submission to any member of the opposite sex. Marriage she regarded as an insupportable yoke; and, though her hand was sought for by almost every important prince in Europe, she resolutely remained single to the last. Favourites she had in abundance, and she sometimes permitted herself a freedom of intercourse with them which the French ambassador, Chanut, considered highly indecorous; but her habitual aloofness was an insuperable barrier to the least attempt at familiarity on their part; never, for a moment, was the most highly favoured of them permitted to forget that, after all, he was only a subject. On the other hand she dispensed her largess with a prodigality utterly regardless of the necessities of the State. Indeed contempt for public opinion was perhaps the most salient, as it was the most offensive form which her pride and egoism assumed. She seemed to consider Swedish affairs as far too petty to occupy her full attention; while her unworthy treatment of the great chancellor, Axel Oxenstjerna, was mainly due to her jealousy of his extraordinary reputation, and to the

uneasy conviction that, so long as he was alive, his influence must be at least equal to her own. Hence her growing dislike of the aged statesman, a dislike which she gradually extended to every member of his numerous family. Recognising that he would be indispensable so long as the war lasted, she used every effort to bring it to an end; and her impulsive interference seriously hampered the diplomacy of the chancellor, and materially reduced the ultimate gains of Sweden.

The German war was gradually dying of exhaustion. Even the Emperor, with his superior resources, could barely defend his hereditary domains. In the spring of 1645, Torstensson, with an army of 15,000 men, invaded Bohemia, proposing, in conjunction with George Rakoczy, prince of Transylvania, to extort a peace at the gates of Vienna, whilst Turenne prevented the Bavarians from assisting the Emperor by crossing the Rhine. On March 6 Torstensson routed Hatzfeld at Jankovich, south-east of Prag, capturing Hatzfeld himself with six of his generals, all his artillery, and 4000 men—a crushing victory which opened the way to Vienna. Torstensson actually penetrated to the Danube, and captured the bridge-head facing the city; but the bridge had been burnt, and, with only 10,000 men, he was too weak to storm the place. In the summer he was joined by Rakoczy with 25,000 undisciplined Transylvanians; but that prince speedily made his own terms with the Emperor, after infecting the army of his Swedish ally with the plague, so that Torstensson was obliged to abandon his plans against Vienna, and go into winter quarters in Bohemia. In December, broken down with fatigue and racked with gout, he resigned his command to a younger colleague, Karl Gustaf Vrangel, who proceeded westwards, and, in August, 1646, united his forces with those of Turenne. Disagreements between the two commanders resulted in a barren campaign; and, in 1647, each of them went his own way with next to no result. Reuniting again in the spring of 1648, they ravaged Bavaria, defeated the Imperialists at Züsmarshausen,

and pressed forward to the Inn; while another Swedish army, under Königsmark, invaded Bohemia and sacked Prag, on which occasion the famous Mæsogothic manuscript, Codex Argenteus, was sent to Upsala amongst the spoils of war. Shortly afterwards the Count Palatine, Charles Gustavus, superseded Königsmark, and was about to march westwards to join Vrangel when the tidings came that peace had at last been concluded.

The negotiations for terminating the Thirty Years' War had begun as far back as December, 1641, at Hamburg, when it was arranged that a general peace congress should meet, in March, 1642, at Osnabrück and Münster. Sweden was to negotiate with the Emperor at the former, and France to negotiate with him at the latter place, so as to avoid all disputes as to precedence between the representatives of the two confederate powers; while the little intermediate town of Lengerich was fixed upon as a place for mutual consultation. Venice and the Pope were the intermediaries between France and Germany, while Sweden negotiated with the Emperor direct. These preliminaries were not confirmed, however, till March, 1643; and the general congress was not opened till April, 1645, Torstensson's successes finally compelling the reluctant Emperor to treat. Representatives from every European state assembled at the congress, the Catholics frequenting Münster, the Protestants Osnabrück. The Swedish plenipotentiaries were senator Johan Oxenstjerna, the chancellor's son, and Adler Salvius. From the first the relations between them were strained. Young Oxenstjerna, haughty and violent, claimed, by right of birth and rank to be "caput legationis," and regarded the incomparably abler Salvius as a middle-class upstart. The chancellor at home naturally took his son's part, while Salvius was warmly supported by Christina, who privately assured him of her exclusive favour, and encouraged him to hold his own. So acute did the quarrel become that there was a violent scene in full Senate between the queen

and the chancellor; and, though even Christina durst not proceed to extremities against the Oxenstjernas, she urged Salvius to accelerate the negotiations, against the judgment of the chancellor, who hoped to get more by holding out longer.

Sweden's original demands were Silesia (she held most of the fortresses there), Pomerania, which had been in her possession for nearly twenty years, and a war-indemnity of twenty millions of rix-dollars; but, after three years of negotiations, a compromise was arrived at, and on October 24, 1648, the treaty generally known as the Peace of Westphalia was signed simultaneously at Osnabrück and Münster. By this convention Sweden obtained (1) Upper Pomerania, with the islands of Rügen and Usedom, and a strip of Lower Pomerania on the right bank of the Oder, including the towns of Stettin, Garz, Damm, and Gollnow, and the isle of Wollin, with right of succession to the rest of Lower Pomerania in case of the extinction of the house of Brandenburg; (2) the town of Wismar with the districts of Poel and Neukloster; (3) the secularised bishoprics of Bremen and Verden; and (4) 5,000,000 rix-dollars. The German possessions were to be held as fiefs of the Empire; and in respect thereof Sweden was to have a vote in the Reichstag, and to "direct" the Lower Saxon Circle alternately with Brandenburg. Full civil and religious liberty was, at the same time, conceded to the German Protestants, the provisions of the Peace of Augsburg being now, for the first time, extended to the Calvinists. France and Sweden moreover became joint guarantors of the treaty with the Emperor, and were entrusted with the carrying out of its provisions, which was practically effected by the execution-congress of Nürnberg, June, 1650.

It must be confessed that Sweden's reward for the exertions and sacrifices of eighteen years was meagre, nay almost paltry. Her newly won possessions were both small and scattered, though, on the other hand, she had now obtained the practical

control of the three principal rivers of North Germany—the Oder, the Elbe, and the Weser—and reaped the full advantage of the tolls levied on those great commercial arteries. The jealousy of France and the impatience of Christina were the chief causes of the inadequacy of her final recompense. Yet, though the immediate gain was small, she had not dissipated her blood and her treasure altogether in vain. Her vigorous intervention in the Thirty Years' War had saved the cause of religious liberty in Europe; and this remains, to all time, her greatest historical exploit. Henceforth, till her collapse, seventy years later, she was the recognised leader of continental Protestantism. A more questionable benefit was her rapid elevation to the rank of a great, an imperial power, an elevation which imposed the duty of remaining a military monarchy armed *cap-à-pied* for every possible emergency. Everyone recognises now that the poverty and the sparse population of Sweden unfitted her for such a tremendous destiny. It was like investing a dwarf in the armour of a giant. But in the middle of the seventeenth century the incompatibility was by no means so obvious; and besides, to extend the metaphor, if Sweden was politically a dwarf, she was at least a sturdy dwarf in the midst of cripples and paralytics. All her neighbours—Denmark, Germany, Poland, and Moscow—were either decadent or exhausted states; and France, the most powerful of the western powers, was her firm ally.

For the moment Sweden held the lead. Everything depended on the policy of the next few years. Careful statesmanship might mean permanent dominion, but there was not much margin for blundering. Unfortunately, just at this crisis, her destiny was in the hands of the most capricious and incalculable of women. The longer Christina ruled, the more anxious for the future fate of her empire grew the men who had helped to build it up. It is true that her country owes her something. In the beginning of her reign she seems to have taken a lively interest in both the material and the spiritual prosperity of

Sweden. She gave fresh privileges to the towns; she encouraged trade and manufactures, especially the mining industries of the Dales; in 1649 she issued the first school-ordinance for the whole kingdom; she erected new gymnasia at Hernösand and Gothenburg; she encouraged foreign scholars to settle in Sweden; and native science and literature, under her liberal encouragement, flourished as they had never flourished before. In one respect, too, she showed herself wiser than her wisest counsellors. The Senate and the Estates, naturally anxious about the succession to the throne, had repeatedly urged her Majesty to marry, and had indicated her cousin, Charles Gustavus, as her most befitting consort. Wearyed at last by their importunities, determined to put an end to them once for all, and, at the same time, desirous to compensate her cousin for the loss of her half-promised hand, she resolved to have him proclaimed her successor. "After all, *Krona*¹ is a pretty girl too," she said laughingly. Accordingly, when the Riksdag of 1649 renewed its matrimonial petition, Christina surprised the Senate next day (Feb. 24) by announcing her decision. The senators protested warmly, but the queen persisted in her resolution and prevailed, though only with the utmost difficulty could Oxenstjerna, who distrusted Charles Gustavus, be persuaded to consent thereto. Christina was undoubtedly right in thus obviating the danger of a disputed succession in the near future; and her firmness claims both our admiration and respect. At the following Riksdag, 1650, the throne was declared hereditary in Charles Gustavus and his heirs male.

Christina's anxiety to settle the succession was intimately connected with a secret resolution to resign the crown. In the summer of 1651 a committee of the Riksdag was actually summoned to receive her abdication; but the urgent supplications of a deputation of the Senate and the Estates,

¹ *Krona*, a crown, feminine in Swedish.

headed by the aged chancellor, induced the queen to reconsider her resolution. Yet, though she yielded for a time to the entreaties of her subjects, she never really abandoned the idea of abdication. Many were the causes which predisposed her to what was after all anything but an act of self-renunciation. First, she could not fail to remark the increasing discontent with her arbitrary and wasteful ways. Upon her numerous favourites, especially upon the handsome and brilliant trifler, Count Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie, and, after his disgrace in 1653, upon her French physician, Pierre Michon Bourdelot, and the Spanish ambassador, Antonio Pimentelli, who is supposed to have undermined her religious faith, she scattered gifts in money and land with such reckless prodigality that the revenue of the State was seriously impaired. Within ten years she created 17 Counts, 46 Barons, and 428 lesser nobles; and, to provide these new peers with adequate appanages, she sold or mortgaged crown property representing an annual income of 1,200,000 rix-dollars. Most of these beneficiaries, whom she also raised to the highest offices of the State, were insignificant and even worthless persons who had done nothing to deserve their emoluments. This extravagance was carried so far that at last it became difficult to decide what did and what did not belong to the Crown; and the queen had to make her donations of land subject to the proviso that she had not already bestowed them on someone else.

Towards the end of her reign the general discontent with her government became loud and menacing; and in 1650 the storm burst. At the Riksdag held in that year a deputation from the lower Estates presented to the queen "a protestation for the restitution of crown property," in which the dilapidated state of the kingdom and the usurpations of the excessively privileged nobility were painted in the darkest colours. The queen received the deputation graciously, though she would not pledge herself to anything; but the question of the restitution

of the alienated crown-lands had at least been raised, and was not allowed to fall out of sight again. Still more significant was the so-called Messenian conspiracy. In November, 1651, Arnold Messenius, a son of the recently ennobled royal historiographer, Arnold Johan Messenius, wrote a virulent squib against the queen and the nobility, and, in the frankest language invited the heir to the throne to place himself at the head of a rebellion. The Messenii, father and son (though the former protested his ignorance and innocence), were seized forthwith, tried, condemned, and executed two days after the passing of the sentence. The hasty process and the cruel judgment cast a dark shadow over Christina's memory, though she speedily repented of her harshness, and, for the sake of the implicated families, forbade any further investigations. But the whole affair was a blow to her vanity, showing her, as it did, that a large section of her subjects detested her. She might, indeed, have regained her popularity by taking the popular side and opposing the aggrandisement of the aristocracy; but this would have been a reversal of her previous policy, to which her pride would not submit.

Signs are also not wanting that Christina was growing weary of the cares of government; while the importunity of the Råd and the Riksdag on the question of her marriage was a constant source of irritation. In retirement she could devote herself exclusively to art and science; and the opportunity of astonishing the world by the unique spectacle of a great queen, in the prime of life, voluntarily resigning her crown, strongly appealed to her vivid imagination. Each of these motives may have contributed something to her otherwise inexplicable conduct; anyhow it is certain that towards the end of her reign she behaved as if she were determined to do everything in her power to make herself as little missed as possible. From 1651, when she first publicly announced her intention of resigning the crown, there was a noticeable change in her behaviour. Her prodigality now knew no bounds. She cast away every regard

for the feelings and the prejudices of her people. She ostentatiously exhibited her contempt for revealed religion, especially the Protestant form of it. Her foreign policy was flighty to the verge of foolishness. She contemplated an alliance with Spain, a state quite outside the orbit of Sweden's influence, the first-fruits of which were to have been an invasion of Portugal. She openly snubbed the Senate by never attending its deliberations, and utterly neglected affairs in order to plunge into a whirl of costly dissipations with her foreign favourites.

At last, when the situation had become impossible, and even the chancellor admitted that if the step were to be taken at all it should be taken at once, a Riksdag was summoned to Upsala, in May, 1654, to receive the queen's abdication. The solemn act took place on June 6, 1654, at the castle of Upsala, in the presence of the Estates and the great dignitaries of the realm. After surrendering the regalia, and divesting herself of her royal robes, the queen slowly descended to the last step of the throne, and thence delivered a parting address to the Senate and the Estates, with that natural dignity which was always at her command. Both she and her hearers were deeply affected. On the afternoon of the same day her cousin was crowned king in the cathedral under the title of Charles X Gustavus. Shortly afterwards Christina quitted Sweden. She had forfeited the affections of her subjects long before she abandoned them.

Christina's departure from Sweden resembled a flight. She travelled in masculine attire, under the name of Count Dohna, to Brussels and thence to Italy. At Innsbruck she openly joined the Catholic Church, and was rechristened Alexandra. In 1656, and again in 1657, she visited France, on the second occasion ordering the assassination of her major-domo, Monaldischi, a mysterious crime still unexplained. Twice she returned to Sweden (in 1660 and 1667) in the vain hope of recovering the succession, finally settling at Rome, where she died, on April 19, 1689, poor, neglected, and forgotten.

The new king, the eldest son of John Casimir, Count Palatine of Zweibrücken, and Catharine, the sister of Gustavus Adolphus, was born at Nyköping Castle, on November 8, 1622. He owed much to the careful training of an excellent mother, and after studying at Upsala made the usual grand tour. In 1640 he returned to Sweden, eager to place his abilities at the service of his adopted country. Oxenstjerna offered him a high place in the army; but the young man, modestly declining to command till he had learnt to obey, entered, as a volunteer, the army of the great Torstensson, from whom he learnt the art of war. In 1646-1647 we find him at Christina's court as her suitor; but the fastidious queen, who could not look without laughing at the thickset little man with the long black locks, who, even at twenty-five, was the fattest member of her court, unable to return his love, at least gratified his ambition by appointing him (Jan. 1648) generalissimo of her armies on the continent. The conclusion of the Peace of Westphalia prevented him from winning the military laurels he so ardently desired, but, as the Swedish plenipotentiary at the execution-congress of Nürnberg, he had an unrivalled opportunity of learning diplomacy, in which science he speedily became a past master. As the recognised heir to the throne, his position on his return to Sweden was not without danger, for the growing discontent with the queen turned the eyes of thousands upon him as possible deliverer. He therefore withdrew to the isle of Öland, and there, far from the intrigues of the court, patiently bided his time till the abdication of Christina called him to the throne in his thirty-second year.

A strong hand was needed to repair the dilapidation, and correct the abuses, of the last reign. To begin with, the State was on the verge of bankruptcy. Its revenue in those days was mainly derived from crown property; and Christina's reckless dealings with that national asset had not only depleted the exchequer, but struck at the very root of Sweden's resources.

There was not enough money to pay the salaries of the chief officials and provide for the wants of the royal household. And the financial difficulty had superinduced a serious political agitation. Throughout the land, noble and non-noble faced each other in fierce antagonism. The general discontent was growing louder every day ; and the mass of the Swedish people was penetrated by a justifiable fear that the external greatness of their country might in the long run be purchased with the loss of their civil and political liberties. In a word, the natural equilibrium of Swedish society was seriously threatened by the preponderance of the nobility ; and the people at large looked to the new king to redress the balance. A better arbiter between the various Estates than Charles X it would have been difficult to find. It is true that, primarily a soldier, his whole ambition was directed towards military glory ; but he was also an unusually sharp-sighted politician, with no abstract theories to misguide him, and no prejudices in favour of birth or ancestry. It was his firm belief that only by force of arms could Sweden retain the dominion which by force of arms she had won ; but he also grasped the fact that there must be no disunion at home if she were to be powerful abroad. Personally persuaded of the superiority of a strong monarchy to every other form of government, he was equally opposed to aristocratic and to popular pretensions. "I should be a big fool," he said on one occasion, "if I fancied I could rule a democratised people"; while his contempt for "the puppet kings of Sparta," and "the Greek republics who ate each other up," was unbounded. But he rejected the idea of an oligarchy with equal energy ; and once, when his friend Per Brahe showed him a treatise by Professor Gyldenstolpe exalting the attributes of the nobility, and differentiating them from the other subjects of the Crown, Charles dashed the book against the wall with the blunt remark that it might suit their Excellencies, but it would not do for him at all.

The beginning of his reign, therefore, was devoted to the

healing of domestic discords, and the rallying of all the forces of the nation round his standard for a new policy of conquest. First of all he contracted a political marriage (Oct. 24, 1654) with Hedwig Leonora, the daughter of Frederick III, duke of Holstein-Gottorp, by way of securing a future ally against Denmark—a momentarily prudent measure, but infinitely mischievous in the long run by intensifying the unnatural hatred which already divided the sister nations of Scandinavia. As regarded his own people, Charles laid it down as a rule, from which he never swerved, that a sovereign should have neither favourites nor enemies among his own subjects. He took counsel of all alike, treated Axel Oxenstjerna, his most inveterate antagonist, with filial respect, and, when the aged chancellor died on August 28, 1654, appointed the most capable of his sons, Count Eric, chancellor in his stead.

The two great pressing national questions, war and the restitution of the alienated crown-lands, were duly considered at the Riksdag which assembled at Stockholm in March, 1655. The war question was decided in three days by a secret committee, selected by and presided over by the king himself, who easily persuaded the delegates that a war with Poland was necessary and might prove very advantageous to the State; but long and acrimonious were the debates on the subject of the aids and subsidies to be granted to the Crown for military purposes. The king proposed that the holders of crown property should either pay an annual sum of 200,000 rix-dollars, to be allowed for out of any further crown-lands subsequently falling in to them, or should surrender a fourth of the expectant property itself to the estimated amount of 600,000 rix-dollars. After some murmuring at the indignity of being taxed at all, the nobility yielded to pressure from above; but they attempted to escape as cheaply as possible by stipulating that November 6, 1632, the day of Gustavus Adolphus's death, should be the extreme limit of any retrospective action on the part of the Crown in regard to alienated crown property, and that the

present subsidy should be regarded as "a perpetual ordinance" unalterably to be observed by all future sovereigns—in other words that there should be no further restitution of alienated crown property. Against this interpretation of the subsidy bill, the already over-taxed lower Estates protested so energetically that the marshal of the Diet had to suspend the session of the houses; and the king had to intervene personally, not to quell the Commons, as the Råd had insisted, but to compel the nobility to give way. He proposed that the whole matter should be thoroughly investigated by a special committee before the meeting of the next Riksdag, and that in the meantime a contribution should be levied on all classes proportionately. This equitable arrangement was accepted by the Estates; and on June 25, 1655, the Riksdag broke up.

The Polish War on which Charles X had resolved to embark has been justified by more than one Swedish historian as a political necessity, the second unavoidable step, in fact, in the policy of conquest inaugurated by Gustavus Adolphus, with the object of uniting all the Baltic lands under Swedish rule by way of a bulwark against Sweden's enemies. Polish historians naturally take another and a very different view. In their eyes the Swedish invasion was a flagrant breach of international law, an inexcusable rupture with a pacific neighbour. On the whole, the Polish historians seem to be in the right. There can be little doubt that the love of glory and the spirit of adventure were the chief motives of Charles X, when, in 1655, he kindled the flames of a war which was speedily to embrace the whole of northern Europe. The usual justification that Sweden was obliged by her situation to anticipate the hostility of jealous neighbours will scarcely bear investigation. At Charles X's accession in 1655 those jealous neighbours were at least not adversaries, and might have been converted into the allies of the new great power which, if she had mulcted some of them of territory, had at least compensated them for the loss with the by no means con-

temptible gift of religious liberty. At Charles X's death, five years later, we find Sweden herself bled to exhaustion point, surrounded by a broad belt of desolated territory, and regarded with ineradicable hatred by every adjacent state. To sink in five years from the position of the champion of Protestantism to that of the common enemy of every Protestant power was a degradation not to be compensated by any amount of military glory. Nor is this all. The imposing figure of Charles X has so long been exclusively regarded from its military, heroic side, that we are apt to lose sight of its political aspect. Charles X was not only a great soldier, he was also a great statesman; but his statesmanship was of a baser alloy than that of Axel Oxenstjerna. He contributed, more than any other contemporary diplomatist, to lower the political morality of his age, and he was the originator of those infamous partition projects which culminated in the obliteration of the Polish republic at the end of the eighteenth century. His own differences with Poland were insignificant and easily adjustable. He could have obtained peace practically on his own terms had not his sense of justice been blinded by his lust of conquest.

But, whatever may be thought of the morality of the Polish War, it must be admitted that the occasion could not have been better chosen. The immense but headless and amorphous Polish republic was just then in the throes of one of those chronic catastrophes to which a more highly vitalised organism must inevitably have succumbed. A seven years' war of unexampled ferocity with her rebellious Cossacks, which had cost her millions of gulden, thousands of lives, the loss of the Ukraine, and the devastation of the best third of her territories, had become merged in a fresh war with the Moscovite who had occupied her exhausted and unresisting eastern provinces, and captured the hitherto impregnable fortress of Smolensk after a siege of only seventeen days. Humbled to the dust, demoralised, panic-stricken, economically on the verge of ruin, with a king, John Casimir Vasa, whose blunders and

misfortunes had deprived him of the respect and confidence of his subjects, Poland seemed an easy prey to the first aggressor; and Charles X resolved to win a cheap triumph by attacking her forthwith, and wresting from her what still remained of her Baltic provinces, to prevent them from falling into the hands of Russia.

The political situation in Europe was highly favourable for such an undertaking. None of Sweden's numerous enemies was just then in a position to injure her; and Charles X's skilful diplomacy did its utmost to allay the uneasiness provoked by the rumour of his far-reaching plans. But if he had no opponents, he also had no allies. France would not assist an enterprise from which she could derive no profit; and both Oliver Cromwell and the Elector Frederick William of Brandenburg, whom the Swedish king tried to win at the outset, preserved an expectant neutrality. But Charles X's own resources were by no means contemptible. At the rumour of the impending war thousands of seasoned desperadoes, ex-soldiers of fortune of the Thirty Years' War, rallied with alacrity to his standard; and, by the time war was declared, he had at his disposal 50,000 men, and 50 war-ships. But he trusted as much to intrigue as he did to arms. Poland itself had already been well manipulated by a whole army of well-paid spies; and, by the king's side, to guide his steps and point out the nakedness of his mother-country, stood the fugitive Polish vice-chancellor, Hieronymus Radziejowski, the first of that long line of traitors who did more to ruin Poland than all her enemies put together. The king of Sweden's plan was to attack Poland from three sides simultaneously. One army, under Magnus De la Gardie, was to advance from the east and occupy Lithuania, another, under Arvid Vittenberg, was to proceed from Hither Pomerania into Great Poland, while the king himself, after effecting his junction with De la Gardie, was to seize Polish Prussia. On July 10 Charles quitted Sweden, after abruptly rejecting equitable conditions

of peace presented to him by an extraordinary Polish embassy sent to Stockholm at the last moment to offer him his own terms; and when, on the same day, Charles hoisted sail, and one of the senators asked him, "Where shall we next meet?" he replied with haughty self-assurance, "At Warsaw."

Hostilities had already begun with the occupation of Dünaburg in Polish Livonia by the Swedes (July 1, 1655); and on July 4 Vittenberg's army advanced through the marshy basin of the Nitze to the Uszez, where lay in an almost impregnable position 15,000 hastily mustered and dispirited Polish levies under Christopher Opalinski. This general, at the first invitation from his outlawed countryman, concluded a convention (July 25) with Vittenberg, whereby the Palatinates of Posen and Kalisz placed themselves beneath the protection of the Swedish king. Thereupon the Swedes crossed the Note, entered Warsaw without opposition, and occupied the whole of Great Poland. Too weak to offer any resistance, John Casimir fled to Silesia. The whole republic now seemed to be in the throes of dissolution; nearly every province was in the possession of a different enemy. The Moscovites, still advancing from the east, leisurely occupied Wilna and Minsk; and a vast Cossack host from the south sat down before Lemberg. The princely Protestant house of Radziwill, by the Compact of Kiejdani (Aug. 28), made common cause with the Swedes on condition that they should drive the Russians out of Lithuania. It seemed as if the ruin of Catholic Poland had at length been compassed by the unnatural union of orthodox Moscovites, schismatical Cossacks, Calvinists and Lutherans.

Meanwhile the king of Sweden, after effecting his junction with De la Gardie, pressed on towards Cracow, the defence of which had been entrusted to the valiant and capable Stephen Czarniecki. For nearly two months he held the Swedish army at bay beneath the walls of the Coronation City, when, seeing no prospect of assistance, he capitulated on his own terms,

and was allowed to march out with all the honours of war. The fall of Cracow extinguished the last hope of the boldest Poles. The Hetmans, threatened in the south by the Cossacks, hastened to surrender to the less barbarous Swedes. The republic ceased to exist. The fugitive king, John Casimir, from his exile at Glogau, vainly implored the diplomatic intervention of France and Austria. He succeeded, however, in detaching the Cossacks and Tatars, grown jealous of the successes of the Moscovites, from the league against him ; and, before the end of the year, an extraordinary reaction had begun in Poland itself. On October 18 the Swedes invested the fortress monastery of Czechstochowa, the Lourdes of Poland; but the place was heroically defended by the prior, Augustin Kordecki ; and, after a seventy days' siege, the besiegers were compelled to retire with great loss.

This success, so astounding that it was popularly attributed to divine intervention, sent a thrill through Poland, and elicited a burst of popular enthusiasm which spread through all ranks of the population, and gave the war a national and religious character. The tactlessness of Charles X, the rapacity of his generals, the barbarity of his mercenaries, his ostentatious protection of Calvinists like the Radziwills and Arians like Jacob Niemcewicz, added fuel to the general combustion ; while his refusal to legalise his position by summoning the Sejm, his negotiations for the partition of the very state he affected to befriend, and the ruinous contributions levied upon the nobility and gentry, awoke the long slumbering public spirit of the country. The first visible sign of this general reaction was the Confederation of Tyszowiec (Dec. 29, 1655) formed by the Hetmans, Stanislaus Potocki and Lankoronski, for the defence of "the king, the Faith, and freedom." Another simultaneous confederation in Lithuania, under Sapieha and Gasiowski, besieged and captured the leader of the Lithuanian Calvinists, Janus Radziwill, in his fortress of Tykocin, where he died on the last day of the year. Thus when, in the beginning

of 1656, John Casimir returned from his Silesian exile, he was able to attract all the patriotic elements in the country to his standard. In April, 1656, he entered Lemberg in triumph, and, at a solemn service held in the cathedral, placed himself and his country beneath the protection of the Blessed Virgin. The Polish army was then reorganised; and Stephen Czarniecki was appointed its commander-in-chief.

By this time Charles X had discovered that it was easier to defeat the Poles than to conquer Poland. Difficulties multiplied around him at every step. His chief object, the conquest of Prussia, was still unaccomplished; and a new foe, the Elector of Brandenburg, alarmed by the ambition of the Swedish king, opposed its accomplishment. A rapid march upon Königsberg, where he besieged the Elector, and compelled him, at the point of the sword, to become his ally and vassal (Treaty of Königsberg, Jan. 17, 1656), averted the more pressing danger; but the tidings of the national rising in Poland itself, and the return of the Polish king, now imperatively demanded his presence in the south. Accordingly in January, 1656, Charles X broke up from Königsberg at the head of 15,000 men. For weeks he scoured the interminable, snow-covered plains of Poland, pursuing and defeating Czarniecki whenever he could bring that adroit guerilla chieftain to an engagement, and penetrating as far as Jaroslaw in Galicia, by which time he had lost two-thirds of his little army with no apparent result. His retreat from Jaroslaw, with the fragments of his host, amidst three converging armies, in a marshy forest region, intersected in every direction by well-guarded rivers, was one of his most brilliant achievements. More than once, notably at the passage of the San, absolute ruin seemed inevitable; but his genius, his audacity, and the superiority of his artillery, combined to save him; and, in the beginning of April, he was back again at Warsaw. After him, like a deluge, swept the Polish forces, exterminating all the small Swedish garrisons in their way, and recovering province after province.

On June 21, Vittenberg, after an heroic resistance, which reduced his forces from 4000 to 510, was forced to surrender Warsaw itself to the Polish king. Charles X was powerless to relieve it. Poverty had all along been a drag upon his triumphal car; and all around him the political horizon was visibly darkening. A Dutch fleet had entered the Baltic to relieve Dantzig; and the court of Vienna was urging the Moscovite against him. He was obliged to look around for serviceable allies, and his glance fell upon Frederick William of Brandenburg, who promised, by the Treaty of Marienburg, June 25, 1656, to aid him instantly with 4000 men, and ultimately, if necessary, with the whole of his forces in return for promises of Polish territory. On July 18—20 the combined Swedes and Brandenburgers, 18,000 strong, after a three days' battle defeated John Casimir and Czarniecki's army of 100,000 at Warsaw, and reoccupied the Polish capital; but this brilliant feat of arms was altogether fruitless, and the subsequent victories of the indefatigable Czarniecki at Radom and Rawa, and the suspicious attitude of Frederick William, compelled the Swedish king at last to open negotiations with the Polish republic through the French ambassador, Des Lumbres. The Poles, however, encouraged by the manifest difficulties of the Swedes, naturally refused their terms; and the war was resumed.

In the beginning of November John Casimir entered Dantzig, whereupon Charles concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with the Elector of Brandenburg (Treaty of Labiau, Nov. 20) whereby it was agreed that Frederick William and his heirs should henceforth possess the full sovereignty of East Prussia. This was an essential modification of Charles's Baltic policy; but the alliance of the Elector had now become indispensable under almost any terms. Another proof of Charles's desperate position was his treaty with Francis Rakoczy, prince of Transylvania, Dec. 16, 1656, who was attracted to the Swedish alliance by the promise of all

Poland's south-eastern provinces. In the spring of 1657, Rakoczy, with a horde of 60,000 semi-barbarians, joined the 17,000 Swedish veterans near Sandomir; but the solitary success of the raid was the capture of the fortress of Bresc Litewsk; and, on the departure of the king, Rakoczy was driven headlong out of Poland by Czarniecki. Meanwhile Sweden's Baltic provinces had been suffering all the horrors of a Moscovite invasion. Tsar Alexius, who would not share with Sweden a booty he had reserved for himself, ravaged Ingria, Carelia, and Livonia in the course of 1656, inflicting incalculable misery on the country folks, but failing to capture any important fortress. Fortunately in December, 1658, the Tsar consented to a truce of three years, which enabled the Swedish king to turn his arms against yet another foe who had suddenly declared war against him. This foe was Denmark.

In Denmark the death of Christian IV (p. 176) had been followed by a four months' interregnum. Not till July 6, 1648, did his son and successor, Frederick III, receive the homage of his subjects, and only after he had signed a Haandfæstning, or charter, by which the already diminished royal prerogative was still further curtailed. The new king was regarded by the Rigsraad and the nobility generally with suspicion. It had been doubtful at first whether he would be allowed to inherit his ancestral throne; but, if the Senate feared him much, they feared the party of Christina Munk still more; and Frederick himself removed their last scruple by unhesitatingly accepting the conditions imposed upon him by them. Frederick III was a reserved, enigmatical prince, who spoke little and wrote less—a striking contrast to Christian IV. But, if he lacked the brilliant qualities of his impulsive, jovial father, he possessed in a high degree the compensating virtues of moderation, sobriety, and self-control. He was, indeed, a prudent, circumspect prince, highly educated, even learned, with considerable political experience, and a latent reserve of courage; and by his side stood his energetic and masterful consort, Sophia

Amelia, the daughter of Duke George of Brunswick-Lüneburg, whose ambition it was to vindicate the authority of the Crown against the usurpations of Korfits Ulfeld and his wife Leonora Christina, the former of whom was rightly regarded by Frederick III as the spokesman of the oligarchs, while the latter, as being the daughter of the late king, all but disputed the precedence of the new queen as the first lady in the land.

This antagonism, which began, on the very day of Frederick III's recognition as king, with an unseemly wrangle between the queen and Leonora Christina, was complicated by the revelation of an alleged plot (ultimately proved to be false, but believed at the time to be true) on the part of a former mistress of Ulfeld, to poison the royal family; and culminated in the flight of Ulfeld and his wife from Denmark to Holland on July 14, 1651, to avoid being summoned before the Rigsraad at the instance of the king on only too well-grounded charges of peculation and other high misdemeanours. A few weeks previously Hannibal Sehested, the next most prominent son-in-law of Christian IV, had been brought before the Senate on a similar charge, and, after freely confessing his offence, had compromised matters by resigning his senatorship, and surrendering appropriated property of the value of £400,000, in return for which submission he received a royal letter of pardon. The disgrace and effacement of the two wealthiest and most capable of the Danish magnates, signified, in the first instance, the political collapse of the long dominant "Son-in-law Party," and an increase of the royal power and prestige at the expense of the aristocracy. But it was to have other and far-reaching consequences, especially affecting the foreign policy of Denmark. Down to 1651, Ulfeld, as minister for foreign affairs, had controlled that policy; after 1651 Frederick III was alone responsible for it. Fear and hatred of Denmark's hereditary eastern enemy, Sweden, and the never abandoned hope of recovering the lost provinces, animated

king and people alike. There was no difference of opinion as to the aim of Denmark's policy, but as to the means and the proper time for action no two opinions agreed; and unfortunately it was the king who decided at the last moment, and decided disastrously. It was Denmark's crowning misfortune that she possessed at this difficult crisis no statesman of the first rank, no one even approximately comparable with such competitors as Charles X, Eric Oxenstjerna, or the Elector Frederick William of Brandenburg. If Griffenfeld had been born a generation earlier, he, and he alone, might successfully have steered his country through her difficulties; for the whole situation, with its complications and entanglements, would have given full play to his extraordinary suppleness and perspicacity. As it was, Denmark had to depend on Frederick III alone; and unfortunately Frederick III was not the man to take a clear view of the political horizon, or even to recognise his own and his country's limitations.

The succession of Charles X was rightly regarded in Denmark as a fresh source of danger. It was felt that temperament and policy would combine to make Charles an aggressive warrior-king: the only uncertainty was, in which direction would he turn his arms first. His invasion of Poland came as a distinct relief to the Danes, though even the Polish war was full of latent peril for Denmark, inasmuch as Sweden's successes would at the very least mean fresh embargoes on the eastern Baltic trade, and a consequent diminution of the Sound tolls. Moreover the triumphal progress of Charles in Poland, and especially his levying of tolls upon the shipping in the Baltic ports, had aroused the Netherlands and caused them to abandon the pacific policy hitherto followed by the Grand Pensionary, Jan de Witt. In May, 1656, a strong Dutch fleet appeared in Danish waters to maintain the freedom of the Baltic; and in August a Danish squadron was sent to assist the Dutch to defend Dantzig against the Swedes. Simultaneously an embassy from Tsar Alexius, who had already

broken with Sweden and invaded Ingria, arrived at Copenhagen with the offer of an offensive and defensive alliance, the Tsar promising not to conclude peace with Sweden till the latter had restored to Denmark all her former territory. From that moment Frederick III was resolved upon a rupture at the first convenient opportunity ; and that too despite the tidings of the Convention of Elbing (Sept. 1, 1656) between Sweden and the Netherlands, whereby Charles X astutely disarmed the hostility of the Dutch by placing them in the position of the most favoured nation. Disappointed by the Netherlands, it was to the Emperor, Sweden's natural enemy, that Frederick III now had recourse. The intermediary was Count Rebolledo, the Spanish minister at Copenhagen ; and in the beginning of December an extraordinary embassy was sent by the Danish government to Vienna, to negotiate an alliance. But in Vienna the peace party proved to be in the ascendant ; while a simultaneous embassy to the Netherlands, with a similar object, foundered on the reserved and cautious neutrality of the Grand Pensionary.

With no immediate prospect of foreign allies, a wary and expectant policy was incumbent upon the Danish government ; but unfortunately Frederick III was now, more than ever, bent upon war, while the nation was, if possible, even more bellicose than the king. The Rigsdag, which assembled at Odense on February 23, 1657, willingly granted considerable subsidies for mobilisation and other military expenses, leaving it to the government to decide whether the impending war was to be offensive or defensive. The Estates of Norway and the Landtag of the Duchies proved equally complaisant ; and in March there was some improvement in the political situation abroad. Franz von Lisola, the Austrian ambassador at John Casimir's court, hastened to Vienna to throw all the weight of his influence into the scales of war, and persuaded the new Emperor, Leopold I, to send an army corps to help the Poles against the Swedes, and declare his willingness to

contract a defensive alliance with Denmark, provided that the war was kept as far as possible from German territory to avoid a breach of the Peace of Westphalia. This very qualified promise of support was decisive. On April 15, Frederick III desired, and on April 23 he received, the assent of the majority of the Senate to a declaration of war against Sweden. The apparently insuperable difficulties of Sweden in Poland, and the disinclination of the Danish government to waste its costly armaments in a mere demonstration, were the real causes of this gratuitous rupture with the greatest military power in Europe. In the beginning of May the still pending negotiations with Sweden were broken off; and on June 1, 1657, Frederick III signed the manifesto justifying a war which was never formally declared. Denmark, ill equipped at home and unsupported abroad, had lightly taken a step which was to bring her to the very verge of ruin.

It was with extreme satisfaction that Charles X received the tidings of the rupture. The hostile action of Denmark enabled him honourably to emerge from the hopeless and now inglorious Polish imbroglio, and win fresh laurels in unwasted regions nearer home; and he was certain of the zealous support of his people, with whom a Danish war was always popular. He had learnt from Torsstensson that Denmark was most vulnerable if attacked from the south, and, imitating the strategy of his master, he fell upon her with a velocity which paralysed resistance. At the end of June, 1657, at the head of 8000 seasoned veterans, he broke up from Bromberg in Prussia, and, marching rapidly through Pomerania and Mecklenburg, reached the borders of Holstein on July 18. During his march he sent for Korfits Ulfeld, then residing at Barth in Pomerania, who gladly seized this opportunity of gratifying his vengeance and his ambition at the same time, by entering the service of his country's deadliest foe, for the express purpose of humiliating his sovereign and enriching himself. A Danish army had already invaded Sweden's German possessions,

captured the fortress of Bremervörde, and gained some other trifling successes, when the alarming intelligence of the unexpected arrival of the Swedish king in Holstein forced it to retreat; and the retreat speedily became a panic when a slight skirmish north of Hamburg convinced the Danes of the superiority of the Swedish troops. The Danish army thereupon dispersed, the infantry being sent to reinforce the fortresses of Glückstadt and Krempe, while the cavalry fled precipitately to the new fortress of Fredriksodde recently erected to guard the Little Belt. Thus the Danish first line of defence had completely broken down. The duchy of Bremen was quickly recovered by the Swedes, who in the early autumn swarmed over Jutland and firmly established themselves in the Duchies. Finally the duke of Gottorp, for the first time, openly joined the enemies of Denmark (*Treaty of Kiel, Sept. 10*).

The cowardice of the Danish troops and the incompetence of their commanders had opened the way of Charles X into the very heart of the Danish realm; but the fortress of Fredriksodde, a quite unlooked-for obstacle, held his little army at bay from the middle of August to the middle of October; while the Danish fleet, her one effective arm, after a stubborn two days' battle (Sept. 12–14) between Moen and Falster, compelled the Swedish fleet to abandon its projected attack on the Danish islands, and put into Wismar for repairs. The position of the Swedish king was now becoming critical. In July an offensive and defensive alliance was concluded between Denmark and Poland; and in the same month an Austrian army entered Poland, compelled the Swedes to abandon Cracow, and even threatened Prussia. Still more ominously, the Elector of Brandenburg, perceiving Sweden to be in difficulties, joined the league against her by contracting alliances with John Casimir (*Treaty of Wehlau, Sept. 1657*) and with Denmark (*Treaty of Copenhagen, Oct. 20*). The formation of this powerful league against him induced Charles to abandon his original intention of partitioning Denmark, and

accept the proffered mediation of Cromwell and Mazarin, both of whom desired peace between the two Scandinavian kingdoms, the former because he feared a *rapprochement* between Denmark and the Catholic powers, the latter because he desired to employ the arms of Sweden in Germany against the house of Habsburg. The negotiations foundered, however, upon the refusal of Sweden to refer the points in dispute to a general peace congress, and upon the rising hopes of Denmark, which expected much from the assistance of Brandenburg and Poland, and anticipated, not unreasonably, that the fortress of Fredriksodde, with its 6000 defenders, could easily wear out the little army of 4000 besiegers who had already wasted three months outside its walls.

But now a fresh catastrophe occurred. On the night of October 23-24 the Swedish commander, Gustavus Vrangel (under urgent orders from the king, who had gone to Wismar to be nearer the fleet and, if possible, make a descent upon Copenhagen, a design frustrated, as we have seen, by the victory of the Danes off Moen) stormed and took Fredriksodde, capturing the whole garrison with all its guns and stores in an hour and a half. This calamity had far-reaching consequences in Denmark, where it was attributed to the nobility and gentry who comprised the larger part of the garrison, and were openly accused not only of pusillanimity but of treachery and treason; but it did not crush the spirit of the Danish government, which still had no thought of surrender. Additional fortifications were thrown up round Copenhagen; and vigorous measures were taken for putting Fünen in a state of defence. Finally, in January, 1658, a triple alliance was formed against Sweden by the Emperor, the Elector of Brandenburg, and the king of Poland, who agreed to put at least 23,000 men in the field against the common foe. But, before the tidings of this new alliance had reached Copenhagen it was already too late to save Denmark; for meanwhile the king of Sweden had also found a confederate in the powers of nature, and the

struggle between the two Scandinavian kingdoms was already over.

After the capture of Fredriksodde Charles X began to make preparations for conveying his troops over to Fünen in transport vessels; but soon another and cheaper expedient presented itself. In the middle of December, 1657, began the great frost which was to be so fatal to Denmark. In a few weeks the cold had grown so intense that even the freezing of an arm of the sea, with so rapid a current as the Little Belt, became a conceivable possibility; and henceforth meteorological observations formed an essential part of the strategy of the Swedes. On January 28, 1658, Charles X arrived at Haderslev in Jutland, by which time the wind had begun to blow steadily from a cold quarter; and it was estimated that in a couple of days the ice of the Little Belt would be firm enough to bear even the passage of a mail-clad host. It was proposed to make for that part of Fünen where a broad tongue of land, on which lay the manor of Iversnæs, projects into the Belt, and where the little isle of Brandsö, midway between Fünen and Jutland, might be a support. On January 29 Charles X moved his headquarters to the village of Hejls, almost opposite the island. He had collected around him 12,000 men; and the passage was fixed for the following day. The Danes were not unaware of their enemy's design. But the mobilisation of their army on the west coast of Fünen and the lesser isles was not yet completed; and, as most of the troops were concentrated between Meddelfast and Strib, to prevent a passage where the Belt was narrowest, only about 4000 men were left at Iversnæs, for the most part raw recruits.

The cold during the night of January 29 was most severe; and early in the morning of the 30th the Swedish king gave the order to start. Brandsö was occupied without resistance; and then the march proceeded over the ice to the broad Bay of Tybring, the horsemen dismounting where the ice was weakest, and cautiously leading their horses as far apart as

possible by their bridles, till the most dangerous spot was passed, when they swung into their saddles again, closed their ranks, and made a dash for the shore. The Danish troops, extending from Iversnæs to Föns, Skog, or Wood, were quickly overpowered and captured; and the whole of Fünen was won with the loss of only two companies of cavalry which disappeared under the ice while fighting with the Danish left wing. An attempt, however, to capture four Danish ships of war in Nyborg Firth was frustrated by the presence of mind of Captain Peter Bredal, who by pumping water over the vessel's sides made them inaccessible, and ultimately succeeded in withdrawing them beyond the range of the Swedish guns.

This, however, was the one bright point in an Egyptian darkness of pusillanimity and disaster. Pursuing his irresistible march, Charles X, with his eyes fixed steadily on Copenhagen, resolved to cross the frozen Great Belt as he had already crossed the frozen Little Belt. After some hesitation, he adopted the advice of his chief engineer officer, Eric Dahlberg, who acted as pioneer throughout, and chose the more circuitous route from Svendborg, by the islands of Langeland, Laaland and Falster, in preference to the direct route from Nyborg to Korsör, which would have been across a broad, almost uninterrupted expanse of ice. Yet this second adventure was not embarked upon without much anxious consideration. It was late on the evening of February 9 that Dahlberg returned to head-quarters from a preliminary tour of investigation. "I am certain, with God's help," said he, "that I can safely convey your Majesty and the army over to Laaland." A council of war, which met at two o'clock in the morning, was instantly summoned; and Dahlberg's proposal was laid before the generals, who at once dismissed it as criminally hazardous. Even the king wavered for a moment; but, Dahlberg persisting in his opinion, Charles overruled the objections of Vrangel and the other commanders. On the night of February 5 the transit began, the cavalry leading

the way through the snow-covered ice, which quickly thawed beneath the horses' hoofs so that the infantry which followed after had to wade through half an ell of sludge, fearing every moment lest the rotting ice should break beneath their feet. At three o'clock in the afternoon, Dahlberg leading the way, the army reached Grimsted in Laaland without losing a man; and the keys of Nakskov, the one fortress of the island, were surrendered to the traitor Korfits Ulfeld, who did his best to convince his countrymen that resistance was hopeless. On February 8 Charles X reached Falster, where he bestowed Langeland upon Ulfeld and his descendants. On the 11th the Swedish king stood safely on the soil of Sjælland, where he was presently joined by Vrangel and the rest of the army. Not without reason did the medal struck to commemorate "the glorious transit of the Baltic Sea" bear the haughty inscription: *Natura hoc debuit uni.* An exploit unique in history had indeed been achieved.

Upon the Danish government the effect of this unheard-of achievement was crushing. Frederick III at once sent his ambassadors to Charles X at Vordingborg in Sjælland to sue for peace. Yielding to the persuasions of the English and French ministers, Charles finally agreed to be content to mutilate instead of annihilating the prostrate Danish monarchy; but his conditions were so hard that the Danish plenipotentiaries durst not accept them; and negotiations were reopened, on February 16, at Taastrup parsonage, between Roskilde and Copenhagen. The preliminaries were signed on the 18th, whereby Denmark consented to cede the three Scanian provinces, the island of Bornholm, and the Norwegian provinces of Badhus and Trondhjem; to transfer 2000 cavalry and 2000 infantry to Sweden; to renounce all anti-Swedish alliances; to prevent, as far as possible, all war-ships hostile to either power from passing through the Sound and the Belt; to exempt Swedish vessels, even when carrying foreign goods, from all tolls; and, most humiliating of all, to restore all his estates and

dignities to the traitor Korfits Ulfeld, who had actually been one of the two Swedish negotiators. On the other hand—and this was looked upon as a great concession—Denmark and the duke of Gottorp were to be left to settle their disputes between themselves. The Taastrup Convention, with a few trifling modifications, was confirmed by the Peace of Roskilde (Feb. 26, 1658).

The conclusion of peace was followed by a remarkable episode. Frederick III expressed the desire to make the personal acquaintance of his conqueror; and Charles X consented to be King Frederick's guest for three days (March 3-5) at the castle of Frederiksborg. Splendid banquets lasting far into the night, private and intimate conversations between two princes who had only just emerged from a life-and-death struggle, seemed to point to nothing but peace and friendship in the future; and complimentary salvos were fired from the Kronborg as Charles X embarked on the ship which was to convey him to the ancient Danish provinces on the other side of the Sound, which now belonged to him. It is also certain that during the next few months Charles had no intention of picking a fresh quarrel with Denmark: Austria and Poland were rather the foes with whom he was preparing to cope. But it is equally true that he meant to utilise the presence of his army in Denmark to extort from that kingdom still further concessions; and the negotiations proceeding at Copenhagen for a closer alliance between the two Scandinavian states were conducted on the part of the Swedes in a spirit which pointed only too plainly to a desire completely to subject the weaker to the stronger power. Moreover the difficulties of the situation were complicated by the determined efforts of Austria and the Netherlands to prevent any conjunction of Sweden and Denmark; while domestic difficulties in Denmark itself, where the ill-will of the unprivileged Estates against the gentry was growing more and more vehement, and the king was suspected of encouraging the popular discontent in order to make himself

absolute, imposed the utmost caution upon the Danish government.

All through March and April, 1658, the negotiations were protracted without coming any nearer to a solution, till Charles X, fearful of the intervention of foreign powers, grew anxious and, at last, menacing. On April 22, indeed, he ordered Vrangel to transport the Swedish troops from Sjælland to Fünen; but Vrangel was not to budge from the latter island or from Fredriksøde till he had received further orders. On the 23rd Charles formally abandoned the idea of an alliance with Denmark, but imperiously requested a definite answer to the fresh demands he had raised during the course of the negotiations; and the uneasy Danish government submissively yielded on every point. In May it conceded to the duke of Holstein-Gottorp and his heirs male absolute sovereignty over the ducal part of Sleswick. In June it agreed to surrender the island of Hven and the Norwegian province of Romsdal to Sweden, and at the same time consented to assist Sweden to exclude all foreign ships of war from the Baltic. But these tardy concessions came too late. Impatient of tergiversation in a conquered and humiliated foe, Charles, at a council held at Flensburg, at the end of June, resolved to attack Denmark once more, and, this time, obliterate her from the map of Europe.

Swedish historians have emphasised the want of straightforwardness of the Danish plenipotentiaries, and their unwillingness to "stand side by side with Sweden in brotherly concord," as if the Danes were not fully justified in endeavouring to obtain the best terms they could from their despoiler; and it should never be forgotten that, however she may have hesitated, Denmark actually gave way on all points at last. On an impartial review of the facts, it seems quite evident that no fear of foreign intervention, no resentment against Denmark's natural unwillingness to accept a "Scandinavianism" invented and interpreted by her extortionate conqueror, but military

ambition and greed of conquest, moved Charles X to what, divested of all its pomp and circumstance, was an outrageous act of political brigandage. The final resolution was taken at a council held at Gottorp on July 7. On July 18 Vrangel received orders to ship his cavalry from Kiel to Korsör in Sjælland, and march straight upon Copenhagen. On August 6 the king himself embarked at Kiel; and on the following day the Swedish fleet ran into Korsör harbour. Without any reasonable cause, without warning, without a declaration of war, in defiance of all international equity, Charles X prepared to despatch an inconvenient neighbour.

Terror was the first feeling produced at Copenhagen by the landing of the Swedes at Korsör. Well-informed persons had suspected that something was amiss, but none had anticipated the possibility of such a sudden, such a brutal attack; and everyone knew that the capital was very inadequately fortified and garrisoned. Fortunately for Denmark, Frederick III, who had never been deficient in courage, and who now saw his realm, his crown, his liberty, and the future of his House in jeopardy, rose at once to the level of the emergency, and displayed a vigour, a heroism, which astonished even those who knew him best. "I will die in my own nest," were the memorable words, borrowed from the Book of Job, with which he rebuked those craven councillors who advised him to seek safety in flight. On August 8 representatives from every class in the capital, summoned to meet the king next morning at the castle, urged the necessity of a vigorous resistance and adequate sacrifices; and the burgesses of Copenhagen protested their unshakable loyalty to the king, and their determination to defend Copenhagen to the last. The fate of the whole monarchy now depended upon the constancy of the capital.

The Danes had only three days' warning of the approaching danger to their capital; and its vast, and, in many places, incomplete and dilapidated line of defence, had at first but 2000 regular defenders. But the government and the people

displayed a memorable and exemplary energy. The suburbs beyond the walls were voluntarily abandoned and destroyed ; the ramparts were repaired by gangs of officers and men, working night and day under the personal supervision of the king and queen ; bullets were cast, cattle were driven in from the surrounding country, money was freely contributed ; the roll of the recruiting drums was heard at the corner of every street ; and hundreds of peasants, tempted by the promise of freedom from feudal service, flocked to the colours. By the beginning of September 7000 men were under arms.

It was on August 11, 1658, that Charles X stood before Copenhagen with his army. Clouds of smoke from the burning suburbs were the first thing which met his eye as he surveyed the position from Valby Hill, and made it clear that he must expect a vigorous resistance. Abandoning his original intention of carrying the place by assault, he began a regular siege, and detached Vrangel with 3000 men to take the castle of Kronborg, which dominated the northern entrance of the Sound. Frederick III had strictly charged the commandant, Colonel Paul Bunfeld, to blow the fortress into the air rather than surrender it. He disobeyed his sovereign's command by capitulating without any serious attempt at resistance. The fall of Kronborg was the last act in the drama of Denmark's humiliation ; and its consequences were speedily visible when the guns of the fortress were turned against Copenhagen. But in the capital itself there was no thought of surrender ; and, before the end of October Copenhagen received effectual assistance from abroad.

The tidings of the second Swedo-Danish War had produced a violent commotion in the Netherlands. By the treaty of 1649 the States General were bound to help Denmark in case of attack ; but far more operative than any treaty obligations was the lively fear of Denmark's annihilation, and the consequent establishment of the Swedish empire in the north to the detriment of Dutch trade. The old grudge against the

master of the Sound tolls was completely forgotten. To save Denmark was now the sole consideration of the Dutch statesmen; and the States General at once despatched a fleet of forty war-vessels and twenty-eight transports, with an army of 2200 men and ample provisions on board, under Wassenaer, to the relief of Copenhagen. On October 23 the Dutch fleet cast anchor a little north of Elsinore; on the 29th it ran the gauntlet of the guns of Kronborg in safety, and on the same day attacked the Swedish fleet of forty-four sail in the Sound, defeating it after a severe six hours' contest, and compelling it to retire to Landskrona. The same afternoon the transports with the provisions and reinforcements ran into Copenhagen harbour. On the following day Charles X raised the siege, and retired to an entrenched camp a mile and a half from the Danish capital. In the course of the next few weeks the province of Trondhjem was recovered by the Danes. Bornholm was lost through a revolt of its inhabitants; there was a serious rising in Scania; Thorn in Prussia was stormed by a combined host of Poles, Brandenburgers, and Austrians under the Elector Frederick William and Montecuculli; while Czarniecki burst into Holstein (Sept. 22) and compelled the diminutive Swedish army there to fall back upon Fredriksodde. By the end of December the whole of Jutland was recovered for Denmark; and on January 21, 1659, a new alliance for the continuation of the war was signed at Ribe between Denmark and Brandenburg. The relative positions of the belligerents were now reversed; and it was the turn of the Swedish statesmen to be anxious.

Nevertheless Charles X had not yet abandoned the hope of capturing Copenhagen, a success which would enable him to prescribe conditions of peace instead of receiving them. An assault was gallantly made on the night of February 10-11, 1659, but was repulsed at all points with the loss of 1500 killed and wounded. Even now the Swedish king did not abandon his plans. He rooted himself still more firmly on

the Danish islands, reckoning besides on the help of England, whose fleet of 43 sail with 2000 guns, under Montague, entered the Sound in April, 1659. The sudden intervention of England was due to the so-called Guarantee Treaty signed between France and the new Protector Richard Cromwell, in January, 1659, for the purpose of bringing about peace between Sweden and all her enemies (except the house of Habsburg, against whom Mazarin, the prime mover in the affair, wished to employ the Swedish armies), and at the same time compelling the Netherlands to accede to the political system of the two other western powers. The Dutch government, fearful of a breach with England in case it continued the war with Sweden, was now desirous of peace, provided that an equilibrium were established in the North, and, at the same time, the interests of the Dutch Baltic trade were secured. The first result of these diplomatic negotiations was the treaty known as the first Hague Concert (May 11, 1659) whereby England, France, and the Netherlands agreed to co-operate in order to terminate the war between Denmark and Sweden, on the basis of the Treaty of Roskilde. The situation was still further complicated by the presence in the same waters of two Dutch fleets and an English fleet. Meanwhile the negotiations had been transferred to the Hague; where, on July 14, 1659, the second Hague Concert was signed, by the terms of which England and the Netherlands contracted to employ their fleets to compel either, or both, of the Scandinavian kings to accept the conditions of the first Hague Concert within a fortnight. But Mazarin, unwilling to use actual force against a contingent ally like Sweden, refused to accede to the second Hague Concert.

The first effect of this external pressure was to irritate and bring together both belligerents; but fresh negotiations proved abortive. On August 26 Montague's fleet returned to England; and Wassenaer was recalled by the States General for economical reasons, leaving De Ruyter's fleet behind to co-operate with the Danes. A combined attack from Kiel and Kolding, made

by the Dutch, Polish, Austrian, and Danish troops upon the small Swedish army-corps of 5000 men still in Fünen, resulted in the victory of Nyborg (Nov. 14, 1659) and the unconditional surrender of the whole force on the following day. The moral and political consequences of this victory were considerable. The Danish government no longer felt itself bound by the Hague Concerts; while Charles X vainly sought a reconciliation with his most dangerous enemy, the United Provinces, by proposing a partition between them of the Danish dominions. Finally negotiations were reopened with Denmark, the Swedish king proposing to exercise pressure upon the Danes by a simultaneous winter campaign in Norway. Such an enterprise necessitated fresh subsidies from his already impoverished people, and obliged him, in December, 1659, to cross over to Sweden to meet the Estates whom he had summoned to Gothenburg. The lower Estates murmured at the imposition of fresh burdens; and Charles had need of all his adroitness to persuade them that his demands were reasonable and necessary. At the very beginning of the Riksdag, in Jan. 1660, it was noticed that the king was ill; but he spared himself as little in the council chamber as in the battle-field, till death suddenly overtook him on the night of February 13, 1660, in his thirty-eighth year. The abrupt cessation of such an inexhaustible fount of enterprise and energy was a distinct loss to Sweden; and signs are not wanting that, in his latter years, Charles had begun to feel the need and value of repose. Had he lived long enough to overcome his martial ardour, and develop and organise the empire he helped to create, Sweden might perhaps have remained a great power to this day. Even so, she owes her natural frontiers in the Scandinavian peninsula to Charles X.

The regency appointed to govern Sweden during the minority of Charles XI, who was but four years old on his father's death, at once opened negotiations with all Sweden's enemies. The Peace of Oliva, May 3, 1660, made under French

mediation, put an end to the long feud with Poland, and, at the same time, ended the quarrel between Sweden on the one side, and the Emperor and the Elector of Brandenburg on the other. By this peace Sweden's possession of Livonia, and the Elector of Brandenburg's sovereignty over Prussia, were alike confirmed; and the king of Poland renounced all claim to the Swedish crown. As regards Denmark, the Peace of Oliva signified the desertion of her three principal allies, Poland, Brandenburg, and the Emperor, and thus compelled her to reopen negotiations with Sweden direct. The differences between the two states were finally adjusted by the Peace of Copenhagen, May 27, 1660, which confirmed the chief points of the Treaty of Roskilde with the important modifications that Sweden now surrendered the province of Trondhjem and the isle of Bornholm, and released Denmark from the obligation of excluding hostile fleets from the Baltic. Grievous as was the loss of the fertile and populous Scanian provinces, which had belonged to Denmark from time immemorial, humiliating as was the establishment of the duke of Gottorp as a sovereign prince within the confines of the Danish kingdom, the Peace of Copenhagen came as a relief in a long series of disasters and humiliations, and, at any rate, confirmed the independence of the Danish state.

But if Denmark had emerged from the war with her dignity and independence unimpaired, she had tacitly surrendered the dominion of the North to her Scandinavian rival. Sweden was now not only a military power of the first magnitude, but also one of the largest states in Europe, possessing about twice as much territory as modern Sweden. Her area embraced nearly 16,800 geographical square miles, a mass of land 7000 square miles larger than the modern German empire. Yet the Swedish empire was rather a geographical expression than a state with natural and national boundaries. Modern Sweden is bounded by the Baltic: during the seventeenth century the Baltic was merely the bond between her various widely

dispersed dominions. All the islands in the Baltic, except the Danish group, belonged to Sweden. The estuaries of all the great German rivers, except the Niemen and the Vistula, debouched in Swedish territory, within which also lay two-thirds of Lake Ladoga and one-half of Lake Peipus. Stockholm, the capital, lay in the very centre of the empire, whose second greatest city was Riga on the other side of the sea. Yet this vast empire contained but half the population of modern Sweden. Even after the acquisition of the Scanian and Baltic and German provinces, the total population of seventeenth century Sweden was only 2,500,000, or about 140 souls to the square mile; and more than half of it consisted of distinct and clashing nationalities, Finns, Estonians, Letts, Lapps, Slavs, and Germans. Nay, far from possessing natural boundaries, Sweden's new frontiers were of the most insecure description, inasmuch as they were anti-ethnographical, parting asunder races which naturally went together, and behind which stood powerful neighbours of the same stock ready at the first opportunity to reunite them. This was the case not only in her German provinces, but in Livonia, where her boundary, running along the Polish border, cut the land of the Letts into two equal parts, and in Ingria, where thousands of Russians dwelt within her borders. There was no unity in the Swedish empire but the unity of the State; and that unity was only upheld by force of arms. The one durable benefit which Sweden derived from her military triumphs was her own natural boundaries and her national unity within the Scandinavian peninsula itself. When her territorial conquests on the other side of the Baltic vanished, as they were bound to vanish, Sweden proper stood behind the great collapsing envelope, safe within her proper confines.

Yet evanescent as it was, the creation of the Swedish empire was not without its salutary effects on the national character. Politically it was a mistake; but the effort to maintain such an empire intact stimulated a strenuousness,

a vigilance, a sense of duty, a spirit of enterprise and self-sacrifice, which produced a whole series of monarchs, statesmen, and heroes, the like of which the world has seldom seen. Had Sweden been able from the first to live within her natural boundaries, her material prosperity might perhaps have been far greater, and her material sufferings far less ; but her history would have lacked that quality of greatness which always waits upon true heroism, and morally she herself would have been the poorer.

1

CHAPTER X.

THE DANISH REVOLUTION AND PETER GRIFFENFELD, 1660-1676.

"DENMARK," says Hannibal Sehested, "went back because her nobility grew unwarlike, and preferred disaster and territorial diminution to any curtailment of their privileges." It was therefore only a just retribution that the Danish nobility should emerge from the war impotent and discredited, hated by the other classes and feared by none. The Rigsraad, the focus of aristocratic authority, suffered a proportionate loss of dignity and power. Henceforth it had little to say for itself, and, while feeling the necessity of reform without daring to initiate it, drifted helplessly towards its ruin. On the other hand, Copenhagen, proudly conscious of its intrinsic importance and of its inestimable services during the war, now openly claimed to have a voice in public affairs. Still higher had risen the influence of the crown. The courage and resource displayed by Frederick III in the extremity of the national danger had won for the 'least expansive of monarchs' an extraordinary popularity.

The first to experience the consequences of the change in the political atmosphere were Korfits Ulfeld and Leonora Christina. Ulfeld's treason had been rewarded by Charles X with the countship of Solvitsborg in Bleking; but the discontented intriguer, imagining himself neglected, apparently began intriguing against his new master, and, in May 1659, he was

imprisoned and condemned to death. The Swedish regents, on July 7, amnestied him; and he returned to Copenhagen to make his peace with his lawful sovereign, who promptly arrested and imprisoned him and his consort. This step was dictated as much by political motives as by a desire of personal vengeance. It would have been highly imprudent if Frederick III, on the eve of a life and death contest with the nobility, had allowed their natural leader, who was also his most dangerous enemy, to remain at large.

For Frederick III had now determined to enlarge the royal power at the expense of the nobility. The events of the war had tended to ripen his absolutist plans, though it cannot certainly be said how far he originally intended to go. One of his chief counsellors at this time was his secretary Christopher Gabel, a man with no ancestral prejudices to prevent him from going all lengths in his own and the king's interests. Of still greater importance were his colleagues Burgomaster Hans Nansen and Bishop Hans Svane. Nansen, born in Flensburg in 1598, had begun life as a trading-skipper, travelled far and wide, amassed a considerable fortune, and, in 1644, was elected burgomaster of Copenhagen. He was a self-made man in the best sense of the word, a shrewd practical fellow, not without a tincture of letters, a persuasive speaker, personally courageous, very determined, yet withal wary and circumspect, and decidedly ambitious. In him Frederick III could reckon upon a devoted adherent, ready to answer for the uncompromising loyalty of the citizens of Copenhagen. The primate, Hans Svane, born in 1606, was himself the son of a burgomaster. After studying theology and oriental languages abroad, he returned to Copenhagen with a great reputation for learning, and, in 1655, was appointed bishop of Sjælland. He also was a man of strong character, resolute alike in speech and action, with all a high-churchman's veneration for the monarchy, with all an able commoner's dislike and suspicion of an incompetent and unjustly privileged aristocracy.

On September 10, 1660, the Rigsdag, which was to repair the ravages of the war and provide for the future, was opened with great ceremony in the Riddersal of the castle of Copenhagen. One hundred noblemen were present, besides the bishops, and the representatives of the towns. The first bill laid before the Estates by the government was to impose an excise tax on the principal articles of consumption, together with subsidiary taxes on cattle, poultry, stamped paper, &c., in return for which the abolition of all the old direct taxes was promised. The nobility at first claimed exemption from taxation on behalf of themselves and their soccagers, while the clergy and burgesses insisted upon an absolute equality of taxation. There were sharp encounters between the presidents of the contending orders; but the position of the Lower Estates was considerably prejudiced by the dissensions of its various sections. Thus the privileges of the bishops, and of the cities of Copenhagen and Kristianshavn, profoundly irritated the lower clergy and the unprivileged lesser towns, and made a cordial understanding impossible till Hans Svane and Hans Nansen, who now openly came forward as the leaders of the reform movement, proposed that the privileges which divided the non-noble Estates should be abolished. In accordance with this proposal, the two Lower Estates, on September 16, subscribed a memorandum addressed to the Rigsraad, declaring their willingness to renounce their privileges, provided the nobility and the University did the same, which was tantamount to a declaration that the whole of the clergy and burgesses had made common cause against the nobility. The opposition so formed took the name of the "Conjoined Estates." The presentation of the memorial of the Conjoined to the Rigsraad provoked an outburst of indignation. The Senate made the cause of the nobility its own; and its chief spokesman, Otto Krag, asked the bearers of the memorial if they really imagined that there ought to be no distinction between a gentleman and a boor. But the nobility

soon perceived the necessity of complete surrender. On September 30 the First Estate abandoned its former standpoint, and renounced its privileges with one unimportant reservation.

The struggle now seemed to be over; and the financial question having also been settled, the king, had he been so minded, might have dismissed the Estates. But the still more important question of reform was now raised. On September 17 the burgesses introduced a bill proposing the establishment of a new constitution including local self-government in the towns, the abolition of serfdom, and the formation of a national army. It fell to the ground for want of adequate support; but another proposition, the fruit of secret discussion between the king and his confederates, which placed all fiefs under the control of the crown as regards taxation, and provided for selling and letting them to the highest bidder, was accepted by the Estate of Burgesses on September 25. The significance of this ordinance lay in the fact that it shattered the privileged position of the nobility in the State by abolishing its exclusive right to the possession of fiefs. What happened next is not quite clear. Our sources fail us, and we are at the mercy of doubtful rumours and more or less unreliable anecdotes. We have a vision of intrigues, mysterious conferences, threats and bribery, dimly discernible through a mist of shifting tradition.

The first glint of light is a letter, dated September 23, from Frederick III to Svane and Nansen, authorising them to communicate the arrangements already made to reliable men, and act quickly, as "if the others gain time they may possibly gain more." The first step was to make sure of the captain of the city train-bands: of the garrison of Copenhagen the king had no doubt. The second step was to provide against defection; and this was done at a meeting of the Sjælland clergy at Roskilde on October 4, when Dean Peder Villadsen, Svane's right hand, persuaded the clergy to give their representatives at Copenhagen unlimited powers. The headquarters of the conspirators was the bishop's palace near Vor Frue

Church, between which and the court messages were passing continually, and where the document to be adopted by the Conjoined Estates took its final shape.

On October 8, at the Copenhagen town-hall, the two burgomasters, Hans Nansen and Kristoffer Hansen, proposed that the realm of Denmark should be made over to the king as an hereditary kingdom, without prejudice to the privileges of the Estates; whereupon they proceeded to Brewers' Hall, and informed the Estate of Burgesses there assembled of what had been done. A fiery oration from Nansen dissolved some feeble opposition; and, simultaneously, Bishop Svane carried the clergy along with him at the House of Assembly in the Silkegade. The so-called *Instrument*, now signed by the Lower Estates, offered the realm to the king and his house as an hereditary monarchy, by way of thank-offering, mainly for his courageous deliverance of the kingdom during the war; and the Rigsraad and the nobility were urged to notify the resolution to the king, and desire him to maintain each Estate in its due privileges, and to give a written counter-assurance that the revolution now to be effected was for the sole benefit of the State. Rumours of what had happened spread rapidly through the town. On the following day Senator Otto Krag and Hans Nansen had their memorable encounter on Castle Bridge, when Krag pointed to the fortress-prison of the Blue Tower and asked the burgomaster if he knew what it was, whereupon Nansen, by way of answer, raised his hand towards the alarm-bell in the steeple of Vor Frue Church, which could at any moment call the burgesses to arms in defence of the king and their privileges against the tyranny of the nobles.

Events now moved forward rapidly. On October 10 a deputation from the clergy and burgesses proceeded to the Council House, where the Raad were deliberating, to demand an answer to their propositions. After a tumultuous scene the Raad rejected the Instrument altogether; whereupon the deputies proceeded to the palace, and were graciously received

by the king, who promised them an answer next day. The same afternoon the guards in the streets and on the ramparts were doubled; on the following morning the gates of the city were closed, a boom was thrown across the harbour, powder and bullets were distributed among the city train-bands, who were bidden to be in readiness when the alarm-bell called them, and cavalry was massed in the environs of the city. Simultaneously orders were sent to all the chief military officers in the country to be on their guard and adopt all such measures as might be necessary to prevent domestic disorder or foreign interference. The same afternoon the king sent a message to the Rigsraad urging them to declare their views quickly, as he could no longer hold himself responsible for what might happen. After a feeble attempt at a compromise, the Raad gave way. On October 13 it signed a declaration to the effect that it associated itself with the other Estates in the making over of the kingdom, as an hereditary monarchy, to His Majesty and his heirs male and female, provided that the kingdom remained undivided, and the privileges of all the Estates continued unimpaired. The same day the king received the official communication of this declaration, and the congratulations of Hans Hansen and Hans Svane. Thus the ancient constitution was transformed; and Denmark became a monarchy hereditary in Frederick III and his posterity.

But, though hereditary sovereignty had been introduced, the laws of the land had not been abolished. The monarch was now an unfettered over-lord, but he had by no means been absolved from his obligations towards his subjects. Hereditary sovereignty *per se* was not held to signify unlimited dominion, still less absolutism. On the contrary, the magnificent gift of the Danish nation to Frederick III was made under express conditions. The "Instrument" drawn up by the Lower Estates implied the retention of all due privileges; and the king, in accepting the gift of an hereditary crown, did not repudiate

the implied inviolability of the privileges of the donors. These were, to a large extent, the sentiments of many of the promoters of the Revolution, especially of the burgesses of Copenhagen, who had emancipated the crown from the influence of the nobility, the better to secure their own privileges. Unfortunately everything was left so vague, that it was an easy matter for the ultra-royalists to ignore the privileges of the Estates, and even the Estates themselves.

On October 14, a committee of four senators, four nobles, three bishops and six burgomasters, was summoned to the palace, to organise the new government. The discussion mainly turned upon two points, (1) whether a new oath of homage should be taken to the king, and (2) what was to be done with the *Haandfæstning*, or royal charter. The first point was speedily decided in the affirmative: as to the second there was considerable difference of opinion. Bishop Svane spoke vehemently in favour of leaving everything to the king's good pleasure; ultimately it was decided that he should be released from his oath and the charter returned to him; but a rider was added suggesting that His Majesty should, at the same time, promulgate a recess providing for his own and his people's welfare. Thus the idea of dictating a new constitution to the king was abandoned. Supreme authority was placed in his hands; and he was to be the official mediator between the Estates. Yet Frederick III was not left absolutely his own master; for the provision regarding a recess, or new constitution, showed plainly enough that such a constitution was expected, and, once granted, would of course have limited the royal power.

It now only remained to execute the resolutions of the committee. On October 17, the charter, which the king had sworn to observe twelve years before, was solemnly handed back to him at the palace, in the presence of the delegates, Frederick III thereupon promising to rule as a Christian king to the satisfaction of all the Estates of the Realm. On the following day,

the king, seated on the topmost step of a lofty tribune surmounted by a baldaquin, erected in the midst of the principal square of Copenhagen, received the public homage of his subjects of all ranks in the presence of an immense concourse, on which occasion he again promised to rule "as a Christian hereditary king and gracious master," and, "as soon as possible, to prepare and set up" such a constitution as should secure to his subjects a Christian and indulgent sway. Then everyone, in order of precedence, kissed and shook the hands of the king and queen, the ceremony concluding with a grand banquet at the palace. After dinner the queen and the clergy withdrew; but the king remained. An incident now occurred which made a strong impression on all present. With a brimming beaker in his hand, Frederick III went up to Hans Nansen, drank with him, and drew him aside. Presently they were joined by Hannibal Sehested; and the three men conversed together in a low voice for some time, till the burgomaster, succumbing to the influence of his potations, stumbled his way to his carriage with the assistance of some of his civic colleagues. Whether Nansen, intoxicated by wine and the royal favour, consented on this occasion to sacrifice the privileges of his order and his city, it is impossible to say; but it is significant that from henceforth we hear no more of the "recess" or representative constitution which the more liberal of the leaders of the lower orders had hoped for when they released Frederick III from the obligations of the *Haandfestning*. The Estates continued in session, indeed, till the beginning of December, when the deputies went home of their own accord; but, though they voted a whole series of new taxes, they got no privileges in return. Even before they had dispersed, a new act of homage was rendered to the king (Nov. 15) at the palace by those who had not been present at the former act; on which occasion the royal family assumed an attitude of dignified hauteur, and there was neither hand-kissing, nor hand-shaking, nor banquet. Nevertheless nobody

outside court circles had the remotest conception that the Estates of the Realm were not to meet again in Denmark for close upon two hundred years.

How or when it first occurred to Frederick III to follow up his advantage, we do not know. But we can follow pretty plainly the stages of the progress from a limited to an absolute monarchy. By an Act dated January 10, 1661, entitled "Instrument, or pragmatic sanction, of the king's hereditary right to the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway," and circulated throughout the country for general subscription, it was declared that all the prerogatives of majesty, and "all regalia as an absolute Sovereign Lord," had been made over to the king by the signatories. Yet, even after the issue of this Instrument, there was nothing, strictly speaking, to prevent Frederick III from voluntarily conceding to his subjects, as a royal gift, some share in the administration. Unfortunately the king was bent only upon still further emphasising the plenitude of his power. In March 1661 he consulted his trusted Sleswick jurists on the subject; and they advised him to promulgate a *lex regia perpetua*. But, at Copenhagen, the king's advisers were simultaneously framing other drafts of a *Lex Regia*, both in Latin and Danish; and the one which finally won the royal favour and ultimately became the famous *Kongelov*, or "King's Law."

This document was in every way unique. In the first place it is remarkable for its literary excellence. Compared with the barbarous macaronic jargon of the contemporary official language, it shines forth as a masterpiece of pure, pithy, and original Danish. Still more remarkable are the tone and tenour of this Royal Law. The *Kongelov* has the highly dubious honour of being the one written law in the civilised world which fearlessly carries out absolutism to its last consequences. The monarchy is declared to owe its origin to the surrender of the supreme authority by the Estates to the king. The maintenance of the indivisibility of the realm, and of the Christian

faith according to the Augsburg Confession, and the observance of the *Kongelov* itself, are now the sole obligations binding upon the king. The supreme spiritual authority also is now claimed; and it is expressly stated that it becomes none to crown him; the moment he ascends the throne, crown and sceptre belong to him by right. Moreover, paragraph 26 declares guilty of *lèse-majesté* whosoever shall in any way usurp or infringe the king's absolute authority.

The *Kongelov* is dated and subscribed November 14, 1665, but was kept a profound secret, only two initiated persons knowing of its existence until after the death of Frederick III. Of these two persons, one was Christopher Gabel, already mentioned as the king's chief counsellor during the Revolution. Gabel's elevation had a political as well as a personal significance. For the first time a man of the middle classes had been raised to the highest position in the State, which meant that the new system was non-aristocratic in principle, and would in future seek its instruments among the *bourgeoisie*. Yet Gabel's supremacy was contested and insecure; and his future successor was already at hand to supersede him, when necessary, in the person of the author and custodian of the *Kongelov*, Secretary Schumacher.

Peter Schumacher, Denmark's one great statesman since the Middle Ages, was born at Copenhagen, on August 24, 1635, of a wealthy trading family connected by numerous ties with the leading civic, clerical, and learned circles in the Danish capital. As a child he was preternaturally precocious. His tutor, Jens Vorde, who prepared him, in his eleventh year, for the University, praises his extraordinary gifts, his mastery of the classical languages, his almost disquieting diligence, which needed restraint rather than incitement. The brilliant way in which he sustained his preliminary examination won him the friendship of the examiner, Bishop Jasper Brokman, at whose palace, which now became his second home, he first met Frederick III. The king was struck by the lad's bright grey

eyes and pleasant humorous face ; and Brokman, proud of his pupil, made him translate a chapter from a Hebrew Bible first into Latin and then into Danish, for the entertainment of the scholarly monarch. In 1654, young Schumacher went abroad for eight years to complete his education at the continental universities. From Germany he proceeded to the Netherlands, staying at Leyden, Utrecht, and Amsterdam, and passing from thence in 1657 to Queen's College, Oxford, at which place he resided three years. The epoch-making events which occurred in England while he was at Oxford profoundly interested him, and, coinciding as they did with the Revolution in Denmark, which threw open a career to the middle classes, convinced him that his proper sphere was politics. In the autumn of 1660, Schumacher visited Paris shortly after Mazarin's death, when the young Louis XIV first seized the reins of power. He seems to have been profoundly impressed by the administrative superiority of a strong centralised monarchy in the hands of an energetic monarch who knew his own mind ; and, in politics, France ever afterwards was his model European state. The social charm and polite culture of French society also attracted him ; and he appropriated its quintessence in an incredibly short time. The last year of his travels was spent in Spain, where he added a thorough knowledge of the Castilian language and literature to his other accomplishments. On the other hand, his travels, if they enriched his mind, at the same time relaxed his character. From the levity of his correspondence, it is probable that at this time he was a somewhat indiscriminate admirer of the fair sex ; and he certainly brought home with him easy morals as well as exquisite manners.

On his return to Copenhagen, in 1662, Schumacher found the monarchy firmly established on the ruins of the aristocracy, and eager to buy the services of every man of the middle classes who had superior talents to offer. Conscious of his ability, and determined to make his way in this new "Pro-

mised Land," the young adventurer contrived to secure the protection of Gabel, and, in 1663, was appointed the royal librarian and record-keeper, in which double capacity he had unrivalled opportunities of appealing to the best side of Frederick III's character, his love of literature and learning. A romantic friendship contracted about the same time with the king's bastard, Count Ulrik Frederick Gyldenlōve, consolidated his position. In 1665 Schumacher obtained his first political post as the king's secretary, and the same year composed the *Kongelov*. In 1666 we find him secretary in the chancellery. He was now a personage at court, where he won all hearts (including the hearts of more than one married lady) by his amiability and gaiety; and in political matters his influence was beginning to be felt.

Meanwhile the monarchy had had time effectually to organise a new and complete system of government. The administration was based upon what was then called the collegiate system; in other words it was a bureaucracy consisting of the various *Kollegier*, or departments of state, each with its president and assistant secretaries. The most important and dignified of these departments was the *Statskollegium*, which took over the legislative authority of the now defunct *Rigsraad*, besides the direction of foreign affairs. Yet the status of the colleges was vague and insecure, all real power being in the hands of the king, who was not even obliged to follow the advice or suggestion of the colleges. Another new institution was the *Gehejmeraad*, or Privy Council, in which the king was supposed to transact business, though he generally preferred to consult its individual members separately according to his good pleasure. The programme of equality, the original "platform" of the new absolutism, was limited to taxation and the admission of all three Estates to the highest administrative and judicial functions; and this equalisation of the nobility, clergy, and burgesses explains the undoubted popularity of the Revolution at the time when it took place. These common

privileges were promulgated on June 24, 1661, as a free gift from the crown.

That the nobility should have regarded the extension of their peculiar privileges to the lower orders unfavourably, was only natural; and there can be no doubt that, during the earlier years of the new absolutism, the majority of the Danish nobility was in secret opposition to the usurping government. Of this feeling the monarchy was well aware; and its nervous apprehension of a possible aristocratic reaction made it peculiarly sensitive to the faintest semblance of treason. Frederick III's treatment of Korfits Ulfeld and his wife may be taken as a typical instance of his attitude towards the nobility generally. Ulfeld and Leonora Christina were, in the summer of 1660, conveyed to Hammershus in Bornholm, as prisoners of state. Their captivity was severe to brutality; and they were only released (in Sept. 1661) on the most humiliating terms. Maddened with rage and shame, the fallen magnate, who in the meantime had fled the country, henceforth dreamed of nothing but revenge, and in the course of 1662, during his residence at Bruges, so far forgot himself as to offer the Danish crown to the Elector of Brandenburg, proposing to raise a rebellion in Denmark for that purpose. Frederick William betrayed Ulfeld's treason to Frederick III. The panic-stricken Danish government at once impeached the traitor; and on July 24, 1663, he and his children were degraded, his property was confiscated, and he was condemned to be beheaded and quartered. He escaped from the country, but the sentence was actually carried out on his effigy; and a pillory was erected on the ruins of his mansion at Copenhagen. Every society has the right to defend itself against the treachery of its members; and for years Ulfeld had striven to injure his country and even destroy its independence. His condemnation, therefore, was perfectly just. His death at Basel, in February 1664, was a distinct relief to the Danish court.

The Revolution of 1660 was certainly beneficial to Norway,

With the disappearance of the Rigsraad, which, as representing the Danish crown, had hitherto exercised sovereignty over both kingdoms, Norway ceased to be a subject principality. The sovereign hereditary king stood in exactly the same relations to both kingdoms ; and thus, constitutionally, Norway was placed on an equality with Denmark, united with but not subordinate to it. It is pretty clear that the majority of the Norwegian people hoped that the Revolution would give them an administration independent of the Danish government ; but these expectations were not realised. Till the cessation of the union in 1814, Copenhagen continued to be the headquarters of the Norwegian administration ; both kingdoms had common departments of state ; and the common chancellery continued to be called the Danish chancellery. Norway did not even obtain a university of her own till 1811. On the other hand, the condition of Norway was now greatly improved. In January, 1661, a Land Commission was appointed to investigate the financial and economical conditions of the kingdom ; the fiefs were transformed into counties ; the gentry was deprived of its immunity from taxation ; the public officials were paid fixed salaries ; and in July, 1662, the Norwegian towns received special privileges, including the monopoly of the lucrative timber trade. Epoch-making for Norway was the governor-generalship (1664-1679) of Frederick Ulric Gyldenlöve, an ardent reformer and an administrator of considerable ability, who laid the foundations of the Norwegian fleet, and would have re-organised the finances on a far more enlightened basis, but for the obstruction which his plans met with at Copenhagen.

Denmark's foreign policy, from 1660 to 1670, was cautious and expectant. Europe, since 1658, had been divided into two hostile camps. In that year the anti-Imperial Rhenish Union had been formed between France, Sweden, and several of the North German princes ; and when, in 1661, Louis XIV personally took over the government of France, he proposed

to use the Union for his own political purposes. The natural opponents of France were the Emperor and Spain, who had formed a counter-league; and it was the object of both combinations to attract the neutral powers into their respective orbits. The Danish government, distracted by contrary opinions, long remained irresolutely neutral. Hannibal Sehested and Gabel were for an alliance with France as being the only power from whom considerable subsidies were to be expected, and as the best guarantee against an attack from Sweden. By the Treaty of Paris (July 1663) Denmark finally acceded to the Union of the Rhine, thereby obtaining a promise of help from France in case she was attacked by Sweden while her troops were engaged in the French interest in Germany. The Anglo-Dutch War of 1665 still further complicated matters. Sweden, chagrined at the Franco-Danish *rapprochement*, had, in 1665, contracted an alliance with England; and Charles II desired to secure Denmark also as a confederate against the Dutch, and thus form a triple alliance between Great Britain and the Scandinavian powers. It was a difficult situation for Denmark, uncertain as she was which of the two coalitions would prevail, especially as her new ally, France, was closely bound to the Netherlands; and there was a fresh shifting of alliances when France, in June 1666, declared war against England. But the Peace of Breda (1667) terminated hostilities; and, in the following year, a Triple Alliance was formed between England, Sweden, and the Netherlands as a counterpoise to the growing influence of Louis XIV, an alliance to which Denmark resolutely refused to accede in the hope of supplanting Sweden as the Scandinavian ally of France.

All this time young Schumacher's influence had been steadily increasing. On the death of Frederick III (Feb. 9, 1670) he was the most trusted of the royal counsellors. He alone was aware of the existence of the new throne of walrus ivory embellished with three silver life-size lions, and of the new regalia, wrought by the royal goldsmith, Paul Kurtz, both of

which treasures he had, by the king's command, concealed in a vault beneath the royal castle. Frederick III had also confided to him a sealed packet containing the *Kongelov*, which was to be delivered to his successor alone; and Schumacher was bound by oath to disclose the secret to no one else.

The new king, Christian V, who ascended the throne in his twenty-fourth year, resembled his grandfather rather than his father. He had the popular manners, the warlike and athletic tastes, and the preference for all things Danish, which had distinguished Christian IV. He was also naturally good-natured and kind-hearted, but, possessing neither intellect nor character, he was very much at the mercy of his environment. A weak despot with an exaggerated opinion of his dignity and his prerogatives—such was Christian V, and his inherent instability and vanity were to do the monarchy infinite harm. Almost his first act on ascending the throne was publicly to insult his consort, the amiable Charlotte Amelia of Hesse Cassel, by introducing into court, as his officially recognised mistress, Amelia Moth, a girl of sixteen, the daughter of his former tutor.

Ministerial changes were the speedy and inevitable consequences of the advent of a new king. A struggle for power now began to rage around the throne. The fall of Gabel, its first outcome, was brought about by a combination between Schumacher, Gyldenlöve, and Frederick Ahlefeld. All three of them stood high in the royal favour. Schumacher had been recommended to his son by Frederick III on his death-bed. "Make a great man of him but do it slowly," said Frederick, who thoroughly understood the characters both of his son and of his minister. Christian V was moreover deeply impressed by the trust which his father had shown in Schumacher, by confiding to him, and him alone, the care of the new throne, the new regalia, and the *Kongelov*. When therefore, on February 9, 1670, Schumacher acquitted himself of his charge, Christian V bade all those about him withdraw, and, after

being closeted a good hour with Schumacher, appointed him his "Obergeheimer Sekretær." The second member of the triumvirate, Gyldenlöve, won the young king's heart by plunging him into a whirl of riotous amusements. The monarch and the royal bastard had the same rough tastes and loose morals—Gyldenlöve had already divorced two wives and was angling for a third—and, indulgent as the gentler Schumacher ever was to the vices of his superiors, the diversions of his sovereign soon threatened to become so scandalous that he courageously remonstrated with Christian V on the impropriety of his conduct. Frederick Ahlefeld, the stadholder of the Duchies, owed his influence to his diplomatic experience and ability.

Ahlefeld, Gyldenlöve, and Schumacher divided amongst them the administration of the realm; but, from the first, Schumacher was the motive-power of the new government; and in proportion as his superior insight and many-sidedness became more and more conspicuous, his two colleagues fell naturally, if insensibly, into the background. Early in 1670 he was appointed secretary of the newly created Privy Council; in May he received the titles of Excellency and Privy Councillor; and, in July of the same year, he was ennobled under the name of Griffenfeld, deriving his title from the gold griffin with outspread wings, which surmounted his escutcheon. Seldom has any man united so many and such various gifts in his own person—a playful wit, a vivid imagination, oratorical and literary eloquence, and, above all, a profound knowledge of human nature both male and female, of every class and rank from the king to the commonest citizen. We may take, as a specimen of this, the different way in which he treated his two royal masters. He had captivated the accomplished Frederick III by his literary graces and ingenious speculations; he won the obtuse and ignorant Christian V by saving him trouble, by acting and thinking for him, and, at the same time, making him believe that he was thinking and acting for himself. Moreover, his commanding qualities were coupled with a pronounced

organising talent which made itself felt in every department of the State, and with a marvellous adaptability to the incessant permutations of politics, which made him an ideal diplomatist.

Fourteen days after Christian V's accession, the *Kongelov* - was read aloud in the Privy Council, so that it was no longer a secret. On June 7, 1671, the king was anointed in the chapel of the palace of Fredriksborg, by way of symbolising the new autocrat's humble submission to the Almighty ; but a coronation was deemed superfluous, and the king placed the crown upon his own head. Before the anointing, Hans Vandal, bishop of Sjælland, recited the *Kongelov*, and, at the same time, delivered an oration in which he declared that the king was God's immediate creation, His vice-regent on earth, and that it was the bounden duty of all good subjects to serve and honour the celestial majesty as represented by the king's terrestrial majesty. On May 25, 1671, the dignities of Count - and Baron were introduced into Denmark, "to give lustre" to the court; and at the same time a rank-ordinance graduated all degrees of honour. A few months later (Oct. 1671) the Order - of the Danebrog was instituted as a fresh means of winning adherents by marks of favour. Griffenfeld was the originator of these new institutions. To him monarchy was the ideal form of government, and as such could not be too highly exalted. But he had also a political object. The aristocracy - of birth, despite its reverses, still remained the *élite* of society ; and Griffenfeld, the son of a burgess as well as the protagonist of monarchy, was its most determined enemy. The new - baronies and countships, owing their existence entirely to the crown, and bestowable solely on the wealthy, whose estates henceforth were to be entailed, introduced a strong solvent into aristocratic circles. For, a line of cleavage being thus - drawn between the ordinary gentry and a new order of titled magnates, the *esprit de corps* of the aristocracy, as the first estate of the realm, was bound to suffer. Griffenfeld knew his own times excellently well. A *parvenu* and an adventurer

himself, he thoroughly understood the part that upstart ambition would be likely to play in Danish society, and he justly calculated that in future the first at court would be the first everywhere else. Very few of the old Danish nobility accepted the new countships and baronies; most of the new nobles were Holsteiners and other foreigners. The bureaucracy, not the aristocracy, was henceforth to be the chief estate in Denmark.

Much was also done to promote trade and industry; and here Griffenfeld had the powerful co-operation of Gyldenlöve. The first result of their joint labours was the revival of the Kammerkollegium, or Board of Trade, and the abolition of some of the most harmful monopolies which had weighed so heavily on the middle classes, although the mercantile system prevalent in those days was an insuperable bar to the introduction of free trade.

The higher administration was also reformed with the view of making it more centralised and efficient. The collegiate system was retained, but its imperfections were remedied; and all departments of state were provided with new standing rules and regulations. What was still more important, the cardinal defect of the new government—the want of a supreme administrative board, in which the king could transact at least the most important affairs—was supplied by the establishment on May 1, 1670, of the *Gehejmeraad*, or Privy Council, of seven members, consisting of the heads of the various departments of state, and the stadholders of Norway and the Duchies. In the same year the provincial administration was also thoroughly reformed; and the positions and duties of the various magistrates, who now also received fixed salaries, were for the first time exactly defined. But what Griffenfeld could create, Griffenfeld could dispense with. A man of his volatile, imaginative genius was bound sooner or later to feel fettered and impeded by the slow and heavy machinery of ordinary government. It was not long before he began to encroach upon the jurisdiction of the various "colleges" by private

conferences with their chiefs, many of them his own nominees ; and he carried this irregular practice to such lengths, that departmental government in Denmark came almost to a standstill. On the other hand it is indisputable that, under the single direction of a master-mind, the State was able to concentrate and utilise all its resources as it had never done before. Though never unmindful of his own honour and glory, Griffenfeld devoted himself heart and soul to the service of his king and country. He reached the apogee of his greatness in November 1673, when he was created a count, a Knight of the Elephant, and Imperial Chancellor : in the course of the next few months he contrived to obtain the control of every branch of the government.

In the three last years of his administration, Griffenfeld had little leisure to complete the work of domestic reform, but gave himself up entirely to the conduct of the foreign policy of Denmark. It is difficult to form a clear idea of his foreign policy, first because his influence was perpetually crossed by opposite tendencies ; in the second place because the force of circumstances compelled him again and again to shift his standpoint ; and, finally, because personal considerations largely intermingled with his public policy, and made it more elusive and ambiguous than it need have been. Still its salient outlines are fairly discernible. Briefly Griffenfeld aimed at restoring Denmark to the rank of a great power. She was to recover her prestige in the European family ; she was to hold her own once more in the midst of contending influences. He proposed to accomplish this by carefully nursing her resources for some years to come, and in the meantime securing and enriching her by alliances which would bring in large subsidies while imposing a minimum of obligations. Such a conditional and tentative policy, on the part of a second-rate power, in a period of universal tension and turmoil, was most difficult ; but Griffenfeld did not regard it as impossible, and it must be admitted that if anyone were capable of making it succeed, he was the man.

The first postulate of such a policy was peace, especially peace with Denmark's nearest and therefore most dangerous neighbour, Sweden ; and Griffenfeld was prepared to go very far indeed in order to terminate the secular antagonism between the two Scandinavian states ; although, on the other hand, his policy, always speculative, did not absolutely exclude the ultimate possibility of enlarging Denmark's territories at the expense of Sweden. The second postulate of his policy was a sound financial basis, which he expected the wealth of France to supply in the shape of subsidies to be spent on armaments. Above all things, therefore, Denmark was to beware of making enemies of France and Sweden at the same time. An alliance, on fairly equal terms, between all these powers, would, in these circumstances, be the consummation of Griffenfeld's "system" ; an alliance with France to the exclusion of Sweden, would be the next best policy, for, with the help of France, Denmark might win something from Sweden ; but an alliance between France and Sweden, without the admission of Denmark, was the contingency to be avoided at all hazards. Personal considerations were, naturally, not absent from these calculations. Griffenfeld's disinclination to war, unless absolutely necessary, was heightened by the suspicion that, in case of war, his influence over the king would pass to the generals ; whereas, so long as the struggle was purely diplomatic, it would be fought not with the sword but with the pen, *his* pen. Yet, even from this point of view, he cannot fairly be blamed ; for, well aware that the king was a fool and the generals untried, he held that military disaster, if Denmark ventured to cope single-handed with a military monarchy like Sweden, was highly probable ; in which case his whole system, demanding, as it did, so much careful adjustment and delicate poising, would disappear in the crash, and himself along with it, to the disgrace of the monarchy and the ruin of Denmark.

Griffenfeld's difficulties were increased by the instability of the European situation, depending as it did on the intrigues of

Louis XIV. Resolved to conquer the Netherlands, the French king proceeded, first of all, to isolate her by dissolving the Triple Alliance. This he accomplished by attracting both England and Sweden, the two chief members of the alliance, within his orbit. Charles II was won over in 1670; and, in April 1672, a treaty was concluded between France and Sweden, whereby the latter power pledged itself, in return for subsidies, to assist Louis XIV by attacking those German states which might help the Netherlands, on condition that France should not include Denmark in her system of alliances without the consent of Sweden. This treaty, which was immediately followed by a supplementary treaty between England and Sweden, showed that Sweden weighed more in the French balances than Denmark. In June 1672, a French army invaded the Netherlands; whereupon the Elector of Brandenburg, already allied with the United Provinces, contracted an alliance with the Emperor Leopold, to which Denmark was invited to accede; and almost simultaneously, the States General began to negotiate for a renewal of the recently expired Dano-Dutch alliance.

In these circumstances it was as difficult for Denmark to remain neutral as it was dangerous for her to make a choice. An alliance with France would subordinate her to Sweden; an alliance with the Netherlands would expose her to an attack from Sweden. The king and the generals were all for war; but Griffenfeld succeeded in restraining the impetuosity of Christian V. The Franco-Swedish alliance left him no choice but to accede to the opposite league, for he saw at once that the ruin of the Netherlands would disturb the balance of power in the North by giving an undue preponderance to England and Sweden. But Denmark's experience of Dutch promises in the past was not reassuring; so, while negotiating at the Hague for a renewal of the Dutch Alliance, he at the same time (autumn 1672) sent Christoffer Lindenov to Stockholm to feel his way towards a commercial treaty with Sweden. Lindenov's mission

proved abortive, but, as Griffenfeld had anticipated, it effectually accelerated the negotiations at the Hague, and frightened the Dutch into unwonted liberality. In May 1673, a treaty of alliance was signed by the ambassador of the States General at Copenhagen, whereby the Netherlands pledged themselves to pay Denmark large subsidies in return for the services of 10,000 men and twenty war-ships, which were to be held in readiness in case the United Provinces were attacked by another enemy besides France. Thus, very dexterously, Griffenfeld had succeeded in obtaining his subsidies without sacrificing his neutrality.

His next move was to attempt to detach Sweden from France. In April 1673, Jens Juel, who shared Griffenfeld's pacific views, and was scarcely inferior to him in diplomatic talent, was despatched to Stockholm to affect a "simulated friendship"; but again Sweden showed not the slightest inclination for a serious *rapprochement*. Denmark was thus compelled to accede to the anti-French league formed by the Emperor Leopold, which she did by the Treaty of Copenhagen, January 1674, thereby engaging to place an army of 20,000 men in the field when required; but here again Griffenfeld safeguarded himself to some extent by stipulating that this provision was not to be operative till the Netherlands had ratified the former treaty, or till the allies were attacked by a fresh enemy. Nevertheless, from that moment, Denmark had made her choice; and her extensive military preparations demonstrated that she was ready to fight. On June 30, 1674, the long unratified Dutch treaty was signed at the Hague; and Denmark's entry into the grand coalition was an accomplished fact. In return for subsidies Denmark was now pledged to keep an army of 16,000 men at the disposal of the allies, though exempted from active participation in the war so long as France was not joined by other powers.

Her exemption was soon determined. The shifty Elector of Brandenburg suddenly executed another *volte-face*, and ac-

ceded to the anti-French alliance. Louis XIV countered this unexpected blow by calling upon his Swedish ally to fulfil her obligations; and, in December 1674, a Swedish army under Karl Gustav Wrangel invaded Prussian Pomerania. Denmark was now bound to intervene as a belligerent, but Griffenfeld endeavoured to postpone this intervention as long as possible; and Sweden's anxiety to avoid hostilities with her southern neighbour materially assisted him to postpone the evil day. In the beginning of December, 1674, Charles XI sent Count Niels Brahe on a pacific mission to Copenhagen; and Griffenfeld spun out the negotiations by proposing terms to the Swedish envoy which he well knew the Swedish government would never accept. On the other hand, he listened favourably to Count Brahe's suggestions of a matrimonial alliance between Christian V's sister, Ulrica Leonora and Charles XI. He only wanted to gain time, and he gained it.

There was, however, another thing which held Denmark back—the negotiations with Gottorp, which had proceeded uninterruptedly for the last three years, and aimed at an exchange whereby the duke was to cede to the king his part of Sleswick in return for the reversion of Oldenburg and Delmenhorst. In April 1675, the Danish government, growing alarmed at Duke Christian Albert's new alliance with Sweden, suddenly changed its tone, and treated the duke as an enemy. In June Christian V visited the Duchies; on the 17th he entertained Christian Albert as his guest at Flensborghus; and, at a subsequent interview at Rensburg, he would have arrested the duke but for the representations of Griffenfeld. The chancellor's conduct at this time is mysterious. At Rensburg, on June 19, he spent some hours negotiating with the Holstein minister, Kielmann, concerning the Oldenburg exchange, on which occasion he stipulated for the surrender to himself, on very advantageous terms, of the county of Steinhorst in Holstein by way of forming a *Reichsgrafschaft* to maintain his newly secured dignity of *Reichsgraf*. At his trial Griffenfeld maintained that

these negotiations were meant to throw dust in the enemy's eyes ; and, as he previously informed Christian V of the Steinhorst concession, the possibility of treason is excluded. Anyhow the exchange negotiations proved abortive, the utmost concessions from Gottorp falling far below the minimum Danish demands. Then came the tidings of the Swedish defeats at Rathenow and Fehrbellin, which encouraged the Danish ministers to apply the pressure of fear. On June 26, the duke of Gottorp was arrested at Rensborg, and compelled by the treaties of June 28 and July 10 to concede all the Danish claims, including the surrender of his forces and fortresses to the Danish government, and the abandonment of all his alliances with foreign powers. There was some talk at Rensborg of proceeding against the Swedophil city of Hamburg in a similar way; but the Elector of Brandenburg protested, and so the plan came to nothing. It was on this occasion that Griffenfeld took a "gift" from Hamburg of 10,000 rix-dollars, in very peculiar circumstances, yet not before he had obtained the king's consent to it.

War was now at the very doors. By the Concert of the Hague the allies had agreed that the Netherlands were to declare war against Sweden; and a concerted plan of operations was drawn up, according to which Denmark was to attack Sweden's North German possessions. Yet still the Danish government postponed the attack; and this postponement was undoubtedly due to Griffenfeld. The fleet, he said, was not ready; but its unreadiness was the effect rather than the cause of his backwardness. His motives are obscure because they were mixed, and vacillating because the whole situation changed from week to week. Here again personal considerations are plainly discernible. Griffenfeld's first wife, Kitty Nansen, a grand-daughter of the great burgomaster, whom he had married in November 1670 (she brought him half a million), died two years later, leaving him a little daughter. The blow was a severe one, for Griffenfeld, naturally affec-

tionate, had dearly loved his wife though she was twenty-one years his junior. Now, however, he was intent on a second marriage. This time, the chancellor aimed very high, hesitating between a Holstein lady, the princess Louise Charlotte of Augustenburg, and a French lady, Charlotte Amélie de Tremouille, princess of Taranto, a connexion of the Danish queen-consort, of whom he really seems to have been enamoured. Perhaps the most startling proof of Griffenfeld's European influence at this period is the warm interest taken in the Tremouille affair by no less a personage than Louis XIV, who, for, political reasons, did his very utmost to promote the match. Strong pressure was brought to bear upon the young lady from the highest quarters; but Mademoiselle de Tremouille absolutely refused to look at a lover "who was not born." As, moreover, Griffenfeld himself had already somewhat abruptly broken off his negotiations with the princess of Augustenburg, he ultimately lost both ladies.

To the last, he endeavoured to avoid a rupture with France even if he broke with Sweden. When in the summer of 1675, the Elector Frederick William forced his hand, and compelled Denmark to intervene as a belligerent against Sweden, Griffenfeld would have occupied the bishopric of Bremen, not as a permanent possession but by way of security for Scania, which, he hoped, Sweden might be induced to surrender in exchange for the Bremen bishopric, artfully calculating, at the same time, on the support of France, which was far more interested in Sweden as a German than as a Scandinavian power. It is impossible to withhold our admiration from this super-subtle balancing of contingencies; and, had Griffenfeld's policy succeeded, Denmark might have recovered her ancient possessions to the south and east comparatively cheaply. But again Griffenfeld was overruled. The king and the Danish generals agreed with the Elector of Brandenburg that the principal attack should be directed against Swedish Pomerania. This decision proved to be not only a political but a personal

defeat for Griffenfeld. Christian V, eager for war, chafing at a policy of prolonged inaction, and resenting bitterly the domination of an intelligence far superior to his own, on August 21 sent his chancellor "fifteen points" expressing in unmeasured terms his royal displeasure at Griffenfeld's whole policy, accusing him besides of presumption and peculation, and warning him to be more careful in the future.

The war which ensued is described elsewhere (cap. xi) : here we have only to consider its bearing on the diplomacy of Denmark and the fate of the chancellor. When hostilities began, Griffenfeld naturally desired them to be prosecuted vigorously ; yet even now he had not abandoned the hope of winning political results by diplomatic methods. He still clung to his idea of exchanging whatever territory might be won from Sweden in Germany for some or all of her Scanian provinces ; he still resolved to retain the amity of France, and did his utmost to persuade Louis XIV that Denmark was likely to prove a more profitable ally than Sweden, and that the latter power ought to be made "to pay the score." Even Christian V, when it was too late, regretted the subsequent breach with France ; but the ministers of the allies at Copenhagen, suspicious of a policy they could no longer understand, and fearing lest Griffenfeld's close intimacy with the French minister, Terlon, might be the first step towards a peace with Sweden, resolved to overthrow him. Unfortunately Griffenfeld himself unconsciously lent them a helping hand. There can be no doubt that the possession of extraordinary power, along with the boundless, almost blasphemous adulation to which it gave rise, had at last disturbed the mental harmony and equilibrium of this most highly gifted nature. In the midst of more than princely power and splendour, he was becoming dangerously isolated. His old friends, slighted or ignored, had fallen away, and he had made no new ones ; all his colleagues had become jealous rivals, especially Ahlefeld, whom he had gone out of his way to offend. Gyldenlöve was absent in Norway ; the generals

hated the chancellor as a persistent procrastinator ; the nobility he had hopelessly alienated ; the king, to whom he was barely civil, and whose kindly warning he had neglected, now regarded him with deep distrust. The most dangerous of his innumerable enemies was Duke John Adolphus of Plön, who had entered the Danish army as generalissimo in January 1676 ; and it was this man's ungrounded fears of Griffenfeld's Swedophil policy which precipitated the crisis.

In February, 1676, the struggle with Griffenfeld, the struggle for the king's confidence, began. It was some time, however, before the chancellor suspected the danger that threatened him. Only in the beginning of March does he seem to have become seriously uneasy, and by that time the consent of the king to his imprisonment had already been obtained. Early on March 11, Griffenfeld proceeded as usual to the royal apartments, but was met at the entrance of the guardroom by General Arenstorf who demanded his sword in the king's name, and conducted him to the citadel a prisoner. On the same day his residence was thoroughly searched ; and Christian V, summoning all the foreign ministers to his presence, informed them that weighty reasons had compelled him to secure the person of the chancellor. Henceforth he would be his own foreign minister.

So far nothing can be said against the conduct of Christian V and his new counsellors. The fallen chancellor had certainly made use of his exceptional position to enrich himself ; and his whole policy must, at the first blush, have appeared obscure, ambiguous, and hazardous to those who did not possess the clue to the perhaps purposely tangled skein. Had he been dismissed from office, Christian V's behaviour would, in the circumstances, have at least been excusable. But it was the intention of Griffenfeld's enemies not merely to punish but to destroy him. A very careful examination of his papers, lasting nearly six weeks, made it clear that he had broken his oath to the king by selling

offices and keeping back letters; but, on the other hand, the official report declared that there was nothing in the chancellor's past conduct to support a charge of *lèse-majesté*, or high treason. Disappointing as this investigation was to Griffenfeld's enemies, it had nevertheless provided them with a deadly weapon against the fallen statesman. In one of his diaries (intended of course for no eye but his own) Griffenfeld had imprudently noted that on one occasion Christian V, in a conversation with a foreign ambassador, had "spoken like a child." This entry was communicated to the king; and, while still smarting under the affront, Christian V was easily persuaded by the duke of Plön to strengthen the hands of the prosecution by employing in the case Otto Mauritius, a German jurist of dubious character and questionable antecedents, subsequently convicted of forgery. It was the business of Mauritius, a mere creature of the duke of Plön and a master of forensic chicane, to obtain a capital sentence against Griffenfeld by any means whatever. A second and still more rigorous investigation was begun, including an examination of the accused, but still nothing like treason could be brought to light; and it may be added that, even with the much fuller information now at our disposal, any such charge is absolutely unsustainable. Nevertheless Griffenfeld's adversaries, knowing that the king was with them, felt sure of a conviction; and, to make assurance doubly sure, the ex-chancellor was tried not by the *Højesteret*, or Supreme Court of Justice, the usual tribunal in such cases, but by an extraordinary tribunal of seven dignitaries, none of whom was particularly well disposed towards the accused.

On May 3 the trial began. The prosecution charged Griffenfeld with simony, bribery, oath-breaking, malversation, and, finally, *lèse-majesté*, and demanded that he should lose his honour and goods, that his escutcheon should be broken asunder, and that he himself should either be torn in pieces by horses, or hanged and quartered. The accused conducted

his own defence under every imaginable difficulty. For forty-six days before his trial, he had been closely confined in a deep dungeon without lights, books, or writing materials. Even legal assistance was denied him. Nevertheless he proved more than a match for the forensic ability arrayed against him; and again and again Mauritius, wincing beneath the lash of the ex-chancellor's pungent wit, had to implore the protection of the court. His first defensive plea, though failing satisfactorily to rebut all the charges of bribery and malversation, is in a high degree dignified and manly. Even at this distance of time it is impossible to read it without a feeling of respect and sympathy. The court was equally impressed thereby; and, for a moment, the question of Griffenfeld's condemnation or acquittal hung upon a hair. But Mauritius, in his counterplea, not only laid stress upon the unfortunate entry in the diary, but did not shrink from bringing pressure to bear upon the judges by hinting at the royal displeasure if they were too lenient.

It was only now that Griffenfeld seems to have perceived that, with the king for his enemy, his case was desperate indeed. Up to this point, conscious of his inestimable services to the monarchy, the idea of the ingratitude of the monarch had never entered into his calculations. But now, abandoning all hope of justice, though still indignantly repudiating the charge of treason, he made a pathetic appeal to Christian V for mercy. "I appeal," he said, "to the inborn grace and gentleness of my most gracious Sovereign Lord. I am as clay in his hands. Let him do with me as he will; I submit myself simply and wholly to his good pleasure. I beseech my most gracious Sovereign not to cast aside and break in pieces the work of his own hands. How can his hands root up the plant which his royal father planted, which he himself hath watered, and whereof God hath given the increase, and which now will wither and fade clean away before the breath of foul and poisonous slander, if he himself let not a gracious ray of mercy shine upon it." Then the

voting began. Nine of the ten judges condemned the accused to degradation and decapitation; but the tenth, Christian Skeel, though a personal enemy of Griffenfeld's, not only refused to sign the sentence, but remonstrated in private with the king against its injustice. And indeed its injustice was flagrant. The primary offence of the ex-chancellor was the taking of bribes, which no twisting of the law could convert into a capital offence, while the charge of treason had not been substantiated.

It has been said in excuse for the king and his counsellors that they acted under the pressure of a sudden panic. There is absolutely no evidence whatever to justify such an excuse. It is clear, however, that Griffenfeld's enemies felt some anxiety even after their victory. Mauritius even went so far as to suggest that torture should be applied to the convict in order to extract something more from him; but to this Christian V would not consent. The execution was fixed for the 6th of June. The scaffold was erected in front of the castle church. On the top of it a black cloth had been thrown over a heap of white sand; close beside stood a coffin, and the countly escutcheon of the condemned man, taken from his pew in the church of the Holy Spirit, where its splendour had given great offence. Soldiers formed a cordon round the scaffold. At seven o'clock in the morning the ex-chancellor was conducted by two priests to the place of execution. He exchanged a few words with those nearest to him, and protested his innocence loudly enough for everyone to hear him. He refused to have his eyes bound, and, after taking off his peruke, bade the headsman strike boldly the moment he unfolded his hands. He then knelt down for a few moments on the cloth in silent prayer; after which he let his hands fall, and extended his head stiffly to receive the stroke of the descending sword. But now the royal adjutant, Hans Schach, stepped forward, and cried: "Hold! there's a pardon!" The unhappy man was stunned by the suddenness of the shock. "God forgive you! I was so ready to die," he exclaimed. On hearing

that the sentence was commuted to life-long imprisonment, he declared that the pardon was harder to bear than the punishment, and desired instead to be made a common soldier. Schumacher now disappears from history. For the next two-and-twenty years Denmark's greatest statesman lingered out his life in a lonely state prison, first in the fortress of Copenhagen, and finally at Munkholm in Trondhjem fiord. He died at Trondhjem on March 12, 1699.

In condemning Griffenfeld, the Danish monarchy still more emphatically condemned itself. It showed itself incapable of treasuring the palladium of a great minister; and from henceforth great ministers were denied it. The Bernstorffs of the future were eminent diplomatists; Struensee was a superior person; but we find nothing in any of them approaching even remotely to the subtle and manifold genius of Griffenfeld. The Danish nationality was to suffer even more than the Danish monarchy from the fall of the man who, with all his shortcomings, was patriotic to the core, and even aimed at elevating his beloved native language to the dignity of a diplomatic medium. For the next century and a half German influences were to prevail more and more in Denmark; the German tongue was to usurp the place of the native language; and the court of Copenhagen was to become as Teutonic in speech and manners as the court of Hanover. Of the immediate nemesis which followed hard upon the overthrow of Griffenfeld, and dragged Denmark down once more into the slough of disaster and disgrace, we shall speak in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

CHARLES XI OF SWEDEN, 1660-1697.

IN 1660, after five years of incessant warfare with half Europe, Sweden had at length obtained peace, and, with it, the opportunity of organising and developing her newly-won empire. Unfortunately the regency which was to govern her during the next fifteen years was quite unequal to the difficulties of a situation which would have taxed the resources of the greatest statesmen. Its nominal head was the queen-mother, Hedwig Leonora, a dull, respectable woman, who voted mechanically with the majority; its ruling spirit was Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie, Christina's old favourite, now imperial chancellor. All the regents were arch-conservative aristocrats, pronounced enemies of the most necessary reforms, who leaned for support upon the equally conservative Riksråd or Council of State. Unity and vigour were scarcely to be expected from a many-headed administration composed of men of mediocre talents, whose vacillating opinions speedily gave rise to fiercely contending factions. There was the high aristocratic party, with a leaning towards warlike adventure, headed by De la Gardie, and the party of peace and economy, led first by Count Gustaf Bonde, and, after his death, by the liberal and energetic Johan Gyllenstjerna. After a severe struggle, De la Gardie's party finally prevailed; and its triumph was marked by that general decline of personal and political morality which has given to this regency its unenviable no-

riety. Sloth, carelessness, procrastination speedily infected every branch of the administration, destroying all discipline, extinguishing all zeal, and leading to a general neglect of business and a disregard of the most obvious duties. Another characteristic trait of this high-aristocratic government was its almost boundless greed and extravagance, which led to a gross political corruption unknown before, and made Sweden the obsequious hireling of that foreign power which had the longest purse.

The beginning of this shameful "subsidy policy" was the Treaty of Fontainebleau, 1661, by a secret paragraph of which Sweden, in exchange for a considerable sum of money, undertook to support the French candidate on the first vacancy of the Polish throne. The complications ensuing from Louis XIV's designs on the Spanish Netherlands led to a bid for the Swedish alliance, both from the French king and his adversaries. After much hesitation on the part of the Swedish government, the anti-French faction prevailed; and, in April, 1668, Sweden acceded to the Triple Alliance, which aimed at arresting the triumphal progress of Louis XIV by threatening an armed mediation in favour of Spain, and checkmated the French king by bringing about the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. For the next four years Sweden remained true to the principles of the Triple Alliance; but in 1672 Louis XIV succeeded in isolating the Dutch Republic, and regaining his ancient ally. By the Treaty of Stockholm, April 14, 1672, Sweden became, for the next ten years, a "mercenarius Galliæ," pledging herself, in return for 400,000 crowns per annum in peace, and 600,000 in war time, to attack, with 16,000 men, those German princes who might be disposed to assist Holland. The French treaty was the last political act of the regency. Eight months later, on December 18, 1672, Charles XI, in the presence of a Riksdag summoned to Stockholm for the purpose, received the sceptre from his guardians.

Charles XI was born in the palace at Stockholm on November 24, 1655. His father, Charles X, had left the care of his son's education to the regents; and in this, as in every other respect, they grossly neglected their duty. The consequence was that when Charles XI, at the age of seventeen, attained his majority, he was ignorant of the very rudiments of statecraft and almost illiterate, while a vivid consciousness of his own deficiencies made him shy, dumb, and awkward in the presence of persons of education and distinction. Yet, from the first, the hardy little sharp-featured youth, with the small keen eyes, and the beautiful long black hair, his one natural ornament, seems to have been generally liked. Those nearest to him had great hopes of him. He was known to be truthful, upright, and God-fearing; if he had neglected his studies, it was to devote himself entirely to manly sports and exercises; in the pursuit of his favourite pastime, bear-hunting, he had already given proofs of the most splendid courage; and neither the meaner nor the softer vices had the least hold upon him.

During the first few years of Charles XI's reign things continued very much in the old groove. The prevalent discord and laxity rather increased than diminished; and the financial distress grew so acute that not money enough could be found to satisfy the most pressing needs of the State. The members of the government absented themselves more and more frequently from business in their country houses; and the young king, finding little pleasure in affairs of state, which he had never been trained to understand, spent most of his time in what he called "exersisiam corporis." Meanwhile the political situation in Europe was on the verge of a crisis. The unexampled successes of Louis XIV in his Dutch war had excited the alarm of every statesman who saw a danger to the European equilibrium in the preponderance of France; and, though De la Gardie and his friends bore an old grudge against the Dutch Republic for its commercial chicaneries, and

hoped, with the aid of France, to burst the fetters which still impeded Swedish trade, they had no desire to see the United Provinces utterly crushed for the sole advantage of the other great maritime power, England. But, above all things, De la Gardie wished to avoid being dragged into a war for which he knew Sweden was unprepared. When therefore, after the formation of the anti-French league, Louis XIV called upon Sweden to fulfil her obligations and actively assist him, the Swedish chancellor offered his mediation instead. This was accepted by all the belligerents; and a peace congress was opened at Cologne in May, 1673, only to prove abortive in the course of 1674; while simultaneously Charles II of England was compelled by his Parliament to make a separate peace with Holland.

Of all the allies of France, obtained after so much trouble and expense, Sweden now alone remained. Louis XIV therefore sent more and more peremptory demands for Sweden's active aid, and he allowed Feuquières, his ambassador at Stockholm, to hold out hopes of increased subsidies if Sweden instantly invaded the lands of their common enemy, in this case the Elector of Brandenburg. Thus, at last, the shrinking Swedish government was compelled to take the decisive plunge; and before the end of the year the aged field-marshal, Gustaf Vrangel, at the head of 13,000 men, invaded the Uckermark, preceded by the great reputation which had clung to the Swedish arms ever since the Thirty Years' War. The Elector, engaged in fighting the French on the Rhine, urged his allies to open action against Sweden; but the traditional fear of Sweden's military prowess still held back the diplomatists assembled at the Hague. In the course of May, 1675, the Swedish army advanced into the Mark of Brandenburg, and in the beginning of June occupied the line of the Havel from Alt-Brandenburg to Rathenow with a view to cross the Elbe and join the Hanoverians in an attack upon the Elector at Halberstadt. But, in the meantime, Frederick

William himself, at the head of 16,000 men, surprised and drove back a Swedish division at Rathenow, and following up his advantage again defeated the Swedes at Fehrbellin, on June 18, whereupon the whole Swedish army, now reduced by sickness and desertion to 7000 men, hastily retreated to Demmin. The Fehrbellin affair was a mere skirmish, the actual casualties amounting to less than 600 men, but it rudely divested Sweden of her nimbus of invincibility, and was the signal for a general attack upon her. Before the year was out the Emperor, the United Provinces, and Denmark had declared war against her. De la Gardie, arrogant in prosperity, grew querulous and irresolute as difficulties began to accumulate; and the eyes of the young king were suddenly opened both to the magnitude of the danger and the criminal neglect of his counsellors. With indefatigable energy he at once attempted to grapple with the situation, ignoring altogether the weak and divided Riksråd, and relying solely upon secretaries of his own choice, honest, able men like Eric Linsköld and Johan Gyllenstjerna, who instinctively rallied round the sole remaining prop of the sinking state. The popular ill-will against the regents found expression at the coronation Rigsdag which met at Upsala in the autumn of 1675, and appointed a special commission to enquire into their whole conduct, De la Gardie's enemies in the Råd even going the length of accusing him of high treason.

Meanwhile Sweden's empire seemed to be everywhere crumbling away. Pomerania and the bishopric of Bremen were overrun by the Brandenburgers, Austrians, and Danes; and the Swedish troops, everywhere outnumbered, took refuge in the nearest fortresses. Charles XI, conscious that everything now depended on the command of the sea, waged an almost desperate struggle with sloth, corruption, and incompetence, in order adequately to equip the fleet, so as not only to relieve the German provinces, but also to prevent the union of the Dutch and Danish fleets in the Baltic. But, in spite of

all his exertions, the Swedish fleet could not put to sea till the beginning of October; and it returned home in a crippled condition without venturing to seek the enemy. Amidst universal anarchy the young king, barely twenty years of age, inexperienced, ill-served, snatching at every expedient, and almost sinking beneath a superhuman burden of responsibility, was working night and day in his newly formed camp in Scania, arming the nation for its mortal struggle, but hampered and harassed at every step by apathy, incompetence, and destitution.

During the winter of 1676 no effort was spared to equip the fleet; and in May twenty-five ships of the line and nine frigates with two thousand guns put to sea under the command of a valiant but inexperienced landsman, Lorenz Creutz. On June 1 Creutz encountered the combined Dano-Dutch fleet off the southern point of the isle of Öland. At the very beginning of the battle, his flagship blew up with all on board; the panic-stricken Swedish fleet was scattered; and the Danes, now masters of the Baltic, were able, in June, 1676, to transport their main army, 16,000 strong, under Christian V in person, over to Scania, while Gyldenlöve simultaneously invaded Västergötland from Norway. The small Swedish army retreated into Småland; and the enemy occupied nearly the whole of Scania, whose inhabitants, Danes in sentiment as well as in language, received the invaders gladly, and forming into irregular bands, under the name of *Snapphaner*, "nobblers," waged a savage guerilla war against the Swedes. On August 15 Christian V and the duke of Plön stormed the fortress of Kristianstad; but a Danish division of 3000 men detached to capture Halmstad, the capital of Halland, and cooperate with Gyldenlöve, was suddenly attacked at Fyllebro, on August 17, by Charles XI and his commander-in-chief, Helmfeld; and the young king's valour and Helmfeld's superior strategy were rewarded by a complete victory. Only six hundred of the Danes escaped; the rest were slain or captured.

During the next six weeks Charles XI remained in camp at Syllinge in North Halland awaiting reinforcements; on October 6, 1676, at the head of 16,000 men, he crossed the Scanian frontier to seek the foe. The Danes could not however be brought to fight; and there ensued weeks of marching and counter-marching across the Scanian plains, during which the Swedes suffered severely from cold, want, and sickness. At length, at the beginning of December, 1676, the two armies encamped on opposite sides of the river Lydde, or Käflinge, for more than three weeks, the Danes having the best part of Scania, a friendly country, to draw upon for unlimited supplies, while the Swedes, half starving in their boggy camp, were perpetually harassed by the ever watchful Snapphaner. When the Swedish army had dwindled down to 8500 men, Charles XI's position became untenable; and there was nothing for it but to fight or retreat. He chose the former alternative, and at midnight on December 4 conducted his host over the frozen Lydde, with the object of gaining possession of the Helgonaback, a table-land north of the city of Lund, and the key of the whole position. But the Danes were also on the alert, and a race at once ensued between the Swedish right and the Danish left, led by their respective kings in person, for the coveted position. Both armies reached the top almost simultaneously just as the rising sun cast its first rays over the snow-covered plain. After a ferocious contest, Charles XI, fighting at the head of his horse-guards, put the Danes to flight, and pursued them to the Lydde, where many hundreds of them were drowned. Meanwhile the Swedish left and centre, overborne by numbers, were sustaining a losing fight with the Danish centre and right, till the king, informed of their plight, hurried back to their assistance, and cut his way through the Danish host, followed at some distance by some squadrons of cavalry. He was just in time to convert what seemed a defeat into a brilliant victory. The Danish army was practically annihilated; and only a few

horsemen succeeded, under cover of the darkness, in reaching the fortress of Landskrona.

The battle of Lund was, relatively to the number engaged, one of the bloodiest engagements of modern times. More than half the combatants (8357, of whom 3000 were Swedes) actually perished on the battle-field. In striking contrast with the Danish generals, whose incompetence and irresolution amply justified Griffenfeld's doubts of them, all the Swedish commanders showed remarkable ability; but the chief glory of the day indisputably belongs to Charles XI. As a Danish historian has said, "He had trampled his enemies under his feet in the most literal sense of the word." This great victory restored to the Swedes their self-confidence and prestige.

The campaign of 1677 was a repetition of the campaign of 1676, inasmuch as victory followed hard in Charles XI's footsteps, and deserted Sweden everywhere else. Twice in that year (off Femern in June, and in the Kjögebugt in July) the Swedish fleet was badly beaten by the great Danish admiral, Nils Juel. On the other hand Christian V lost 5000 men in a vain attempt to storm the fortress of Malmö; and, on July 15, Charles XI with 9000 men routed 12,000 Danes near the same place. This proved to be the last pitched battle of the war, the Danes never again venturing to attack their once more invincible enemy in the open field.

In Germany meanwhile the Swedes had lost everything. The fortress of Stettin was captured by the Elector of Brandenburg in December, 1677; Stralsund fell on October 15, 1678; and Greifswald, Sweden's last possession on the continent, on November 5. A defensive alliance with Sobieski, concluded on August 4, 1677, was rendered entirely inoperative by the annihilation of Sweden's sea-power, and by the difficulties of the Polish king, already embarrassed by a war with the Turks. In Sweden itself, hostilities dwindled down to a war of sieges, the chief event being the recovery by the Swedes of the fortress of Kristianstad on August 4, 1678.

The grand coalition against France was now in process of dissolution. A congress had begun to sit at Nimeguen in March, 1677; and in the beginning of April, 1678, Louis XIV dictated the terms of a general pacification. One of his principal conditions was Sweden's complete restitution. A strong Sweden in northern Europe was necessary to his plans; and he held himself bound by his promises to his solitary ally. As however it was quite another question how Sweden's enemies, especially Denmark and Brandenburg, would regard these hard conditions, Louis XIV insisted that Sweden should rid herself of her enemies by making "some small cession"; but this Charles XI and his ministers positively refused to do. Louis XIV thereupon took it upon himself to conclude peace on Sweden's account, regardless of the Swedish king's wishes and protests. It was this "insufferable tutelage" which inspired Charles XI for the rest of his life with a personal dislike of the mighty ruler of France. On August 10, 1678, at Nimeguen, peace was concluded between France and Holland; on February 6, 1679, between the Emperor, the Empire, and Louis XIV; on February 7, between the Emperor, the Empire, and the king of Sweden. By the latter treaty Sweden obtained full restitution of her territory on the basis of the Treaty of Osnabrück. On the same day peace was also concluded at Celle, between France and Sweden on the one side, and the princes of the house of Brunswick-Lüneburg on the other, Louis XIV ceding, on behalf of Sweden, to the Lüneburg princes, three small strips of territory belonging to the duchy of Verden. The Elector of Brandenburg tried hard to retain his Pomeranian conquests; but it was of no avail that he humbled himself before Louis XIV. French troops invaded Cleves; and the Elector was obliged to submit. On June 29 peace was finally concluded at St Germain, between France and Sweden on the one side and Brandenburg on the other, whereby Frederick William undertook to retrocede to Sweden all the Pomeranian territory conquered by him, except a small strip on the right

bank of the Oder, which Sweden had obtained by the Stettin recess of 1653.

The negotiations between Sweden and Denmark were transferred to Lund in June, 1679; and Christian V implored Louis XIV to allow him to retain his conquests. But the French king was inexorable; and on September 2 Denmark was forced, by the Peace of Fontainebleau, to make complete restitution to Sweden. To save appearances, the negotiations at Lund were continued, and on October 7 concluded by a treaty of alliance between the three northern kingdoms for their mutual defence—really the only wise and natural system for Scandinavia. This remarkable and unforeseen consummation was due to the Swedish statesman, Johan Gyllenstjerna, who both during and after the war was Charles XI's chief counsellor. The alliance was cemented by the marriage of the Danish princess, Ulrica Leonora, to Charles XI in May, 1680. A few weeks later Gyllenstjerna died suddenly at Landskrona, but not before he had opened the eyes of Charles XI to the dangerous position of Sweden, bankrupt at home, and dependent for her political existence abroad on the casual and contemptuous patronage of a victorious foreign potentate. "If we are to maintain our independence," said Gyllenstjerna, "we must henceforth depend upon ourselves." In his opinion, a strong centralised monarchy, established on a sound financial basis, was now the one hope of Sweden; and he urged his young master to accomplish this great work with the cooperation of the Riksdag. In Charles XI Gyllenstjerna found an apt and unwavering pupil. The bitter five years' war had made a man of him, and brought to light his many great qualities, an unerring common-sense, a heroic perseverance, an unlimited capacity for taking pains, while his splendid courage and ardent patriotism had attracted all hearts to him. Charles XI felt that he could now draw upon the confidence and liberality of his subjects to an almost unlimited extent, and he proceeded to do so without a moment's delay.

In October, 1680, the Riksdag assembled which was to mark a new era in Swedish history. From the first the strong royalist tendency of the Assembly was unmistakable, while the party of the Råd was divided and leaderless. Moreover the court had taken the precaution of ridding itself of its most formidable opponents by sending them away on distant foreign missions. Nothing in the royal *propositions*, or bills, gave the faintest inkling of the impending revolution. They simply alluded, in the most general terms, to the necessity of increasing the national armaments and readjusting the finances. But in fact the plans of the court had been carefully prearranged: the king was to remain behind the scenes, while his partisans in the Riksdag brought forward the necessary projects of reform as if on their own initiative. The strife between the royalists and the magnates was first kindled on October 6 by the sudden emergence of the question of the responsibility of the late regency for the dilapidation of the realm; and after fierce debates it was decided that the regents should be tried before a grand commission of thirty-six persons selected by Charles XI himself (Oct. 20). Almost immediately afterwards the question of *Reduktion*, or the recovery of the alienated crown-lands, was brought before the Riksdag, on the motion of the peasants, who had long memories for aristocratic abuses; and on October 23 a joint memorandum of the three lower estates on the subject was duly presented to the king. Had the Råd and the Riddarhus been wise, they would have tried to avert a complete overthrow by voluntarily offering to surrender a portion of their inordinate possessions and privileges; but they were too irresolute and divided to come to any decision, and in the meantime the blow descended. The matter was debated with great acrimony in the Riddarhus on October 29, but, despite the fact that no vote could be taken because of the stubborn opposition of the magnates, the marshal of the Diet, who had won over the lesser gentry by the promise of concessions to its poorer members, declared

the *Reduktion* project carried. In the *Riksdagbeslut*, or Decree, usual at the end of the session, we find careful directions for the carrying out of the *Reduktion*, which is described, with unconscious irony, as a special subsidy of the nobility, an expression of self-sacrificing affection for king and fatherland. By this decree there reverted to the crown all countships, baronies, domains, manors, and other estates, producing an annual rent of more than 600 dalers s.m. (£70).

Not content with placing the property of his subjects at the disposal of the king, the estates now proceeded to surrender their liberties to him likewise. In the beginning of December they presented to him a memorandum opining that the Riksråd ought to share the responsibility of the incriminated ex-regents, which was equivalent to saying that all the magnates should stand or fall together; whereupon Charles XI enquired of the Riksdag whether he was still bound by the constitution of 1634, which made the Råd an essential part of the administration. After a few days' deliberation, the Riksdag replied that the king was not bound by any particular constitution, but only by the law and statutes. Nay, more, they added that he was not even obliged to consult the Råd, but was to be regarded as a sovereign lord, responsible to God alone for his actions, and requiring no intermediary between himself and his people. In other words the Riksdag deliberately gave its sanction to the introduction of absolute government into Sweden. The Råd thereupon acquiesced in its own humiliation by meekly accepting a royal brief changing its official title from *Riksråd* (Council of State) to *Kungligaråd* (Royal Council)—a visible sign that the senators were no longer the king's colleagues but his servants.

Thus Sweden, as well as Denmark, had become an absolute monarchy, but with this important difference, that the right of the Swedish people in Parliament assembled to be consulted on all important matters was recognised and acted upon. The Riksdag, completely overshadowed by the throne,

was henceforth to do little more than register the royal decrees, but nevertheless it continued to exist as part of the machinery of government. Moreover this transfer of authority was, in appearance, a voluntary act. Neither force nor fraud had been employed to bring it about. Charles XI was incapable of the devious underhand ways of Frederick III. The people, knowing him to be their best friend, trusted him implicitly, and cooperated with him cheerfully from first to last.

The Riksdag of 1682, summoned, like its predecessor, to provide ways and means for increasing the national armaments and paying off the national debt, completed the work of the Riksdag of 1680. The question of armaments was left entirely to the king: in case of war he was to provide as he thought best for the safety of the realm. As to the financial question, the nobility unanimously proposed a substantial subsidy payable by every class; but the three lower estates proposed a fresh "Reduction," whereupon the Riddarhus, greatly embittered, appealed to the king to protect them from utter destruction. Both parties impatiently awaited the royal decision; and it came as usual in the form of a question, which transferred the whole matter to another sphere: How far was the king empowered by the law of the land to bestow fiefs, or, in case of urgent national distress, to take them back again? The noble and the non-noble estates gave different answers to this question. The former declared, unreservedly, that the king could give or take as he pleased; the latter denied the king's right to give away any crown property absolutely. Charles XI thereupon drew up an answer of his own, following, on the whole, the opinion of the nobility, which document was subscribed by the estates as if it had been their own opinion. It practically declared that the "Reduction" question was exclusively the king's affair; in other words it made his Majesty the disposer of his subjects' temporal property. Presently this new autocracy extended to the king's legislative authority likewise, for, in reply to a further question, how far he had the right to

make laws and statutes, all four estates, by virtue of a common declaration, signed on December 9, 1682, confirmed him not only in the possession of the legislative authority enjoyed by his predecessors, but even conceded to him the right of interpreting and amending the common law.

Thus the great revolution was effected, and absolutism was firmly established in Sweden. We shall see how this absolutism finally overreached itself, and fell in consequence of its own excesses. Yet at the time it was undoubtedly a benefit. It was the outcome of a political necessity. It delivered Sweden from an aristocratic government whose ambition was sharply opposed to the natural development of the country; it saved the ancient Swedish yeomanry from becoming the thralls of the gentry; and, finally, it enabled Charles XI to complete his great work of national reconstruction. The process was twofold. First the alienated crown-lands had to be recovered; and then, on the ruins of the old order of things, a new political system was to be raised and consolidated. To find a parallel to so revolutionary a change we must go back to the days of Gustavus Vasa; and then, as now, it is one man, the king, who conducts and superintends the stupendous task. Everywhere the stern, uncompromising character of the reformer is reflected in his work. Wherever we turn, we find traces of a severity which not infrequently becomes hardness, and of a justice only very occasionally tempered by mercy. Yet there is nothing petty, personal, or vindictive in this searching inquisition. Jealous as he was of his royal authority, Charles XI was far too just, and we may add too religious, to condescend to tyranny.

The Grand Committee appointed to enquire into the alleged maladministration of the late regency terminated its labours on May 27, 1682. It decided that the regents, the Råd, and the various *Colleges*, or state departments, were responsible for the dilapidation of the realm, by reason of their extravagance; and the compensation due by them to the crown was

assessed by a subsequently appointed Liquidation Committee at 4,000,000 dalers (£500,000). What is known in Swedish history as *Stora Reduktionen*, the great reduction or recovery of crown property, was then proceeded with—a task which occupied Charles XI for the remainder of his life. No doubt this calling in of the property of the crown was both necessary and equitable; but, inasmuch as one claim quickly gave rise to half-a-dozen others, the inquisition gradually assumed enormous proportions, till at last every class of the community was more or less affected by it, while the rigour with which the king enforced it ruined thousands of families. That his mode of procedure was arbitrary in the extreme is undeniable. He constituted himself the sole judge of what did and what did not belong to the State, and, undeterred by the ever-increasing murmurs of the sufferers, and the openly expressed hatred of the aristocracy, he proceeded resolutely towards his goal. On the other hand he was no respecter of persons. Some of the hardest blows fell, not upon political adversaries, but upon near relatives, devoted friends, and faithful servants, nay upon many who had been the first to advocate the Reduction in the secret hope of profiting by it themselves.

The Reduction was originally entrusted to a commission of twelve noble deputies, but, in 1682, it was converted into a permanent department of state, under the direct control of the king. It acted on the principle that all private landed estate might be called in question, inasmuch as some time or other it must have belonged to the crown; and the burden of proof of ownership was assumed to lie not with the crown which made the claim, but with the actual owner of the property, who of course found establishment of such proof more and more difficult the further back he had to go for it. Another axiom of Charles XI was that the rights of the crown overruled all rights arising from custom or prescription; and the application of this axiom naturally gave rise to endless forensic investigations, which resulted in a feeling of general insecurity. Moreover,

with the view of accelerating the calling-in of landed estates, in the spring of 1683, "Reduction Commissioners," with dictatorial powers, were sent from place to place. Thus, year after year, the Reduction proceeded amidst the increasing uneasiness of all who had anything to lose. The estates most easily recovered were the fifteen countships and the twenty-six baronies, to which the right of the crown was indisputable, which yielded an additional annual revenue of 200,000 dalers s.m. (about £24,000). The amount of revenue accruing to the crown from the whole Reduction it is impossible to estimate even approximately. According to the report of the Reduction Commission of 1697, the crown recovered, between 1680 and 1697, property yielding an annual rental of, roughly speaking, 1,940,000 dal. s.m. (£113,162), of which Sweden proper contributed one-fifth; but to this we must add about £102,000 in ready money, and about £1,166,000 obtained by compromise, special arrangement, and improvements.

The Reduction, vast as it was, represents only a part of Charles XI's gigantic activity. The constructive part of his administration was equally thoroughgoing, and entirely beneficial. Here too everything was due to his personal initiative, though he freely employed, and indeed speedily wore out, a whole series of capable and intelligent statesmen. Yet he spared himself least of all, and sacrificed ease, comfort, and convenience to the duties of his high calling. By means of the most careful management and the most rigid economy, he contrived to reduce the national debt from 44,000,000 dal. s.m. (£2,567,000) to 11,500,000 (£700,000); but it took him seventeen strenuous years to accomplish this, and during the difficult process the estates had repeatedly "to hold the king up" by granting him substantial additional subsidies. At the Riksdag of 1690, however, Charles XI was able to dispense with these extraordinary aids, and, thanks to the proceeds of the Reduction, he could now meet ordinary expenditure out of ordinary revenue.

The national armaments, on which Sweden's external security and international preeminence mainly depended, naturally engaged the attention of a monarch who was also a soldier. Charles XI reestablished on a broader basis the so-called *Indelningsverk* introduced by Charles IX and Gustavus Adolphus—a system of military tenure whereby the national forces were bound to the soil. Thus there was the *rusthåll* tenure, under which the tenants, instead of paying rent, were obliged to equip and maintain a cavalry soldier and horse, while the so-called *Knekthållarer* provided duly equipped foot-soldiers. Moreover these *indelning* soldiers were also provided with holdings on which they lived in time of peace. Formerly ordinary conscription had existed alongside this *indelning*, or distribution system, but it had proved inadequate as well as highly unpopular; and Charles XI in 1682 came to an agreement with the peasantry whereby an extended *indelning* system was to be substituted for general conscription. By this means Sweden obtained a standing army of 38,000 men, besides the 25,000 enlisted troops employed in the defence of her foreign provinces. The navy, of even more importance to Sweden than her army, if she were to maintain the dominion of the Baltic, was entirely remodelled; and, the recent war having demonstrated the unsuitability of Stockholm as a naval station, the construction of a new arsenal on a gigantic scale was simultaneously begun at Carlskrona. This twofold task was entrusted to Hans Vachtmeister, who, after a seventeen years' struggle against all manner of difficulties, succeeded in providing Sweden with a fleet of forty-three three-deckers, manned by 11,000 men, and armed with 2648 guns, and one of the finest arsenals in the world.

Space fails me to tell of the remaining labours of Charles XI, which would require a whole chapter to themselves. Briefly, they aimed at centralisation and efficiency, and were equally minute and sweeping. Finance, commerce, industry, judicial procedure, church government, education, even art and

science—everything, in short—emerged recast from his shaping hand.

Foreign affairs, usually the favourite occupation or amusements of autocrats, were the one department with which Charles XI, conscious of his own shortcomings, had the good sense never to meddle. Down to 1680 they had been in the charge of Johan Gyllenstjerna, on whose death in 1680 the king entrusted them to Count Benedict Oxenstjerna, a cautious, elderly diplomatist of great experience, who had represented Sweden with distinction at the peace congress of Nimeguen (1678). Oxenstjerna's appointment marks a revolution in Swedish diplomacy. While his predecessor Gyllenstjerna had sought the security of Sweden in pan-Scandinavian unity, as a first step towards a triple alliance between Sweden, Denmark, and France, Oxenstjerna regarded Denmark as Sweden's natural enemy, and France as a dangerous and most undesirable friend. Not without reason he suspected Louis XIV of aiming at universal monarchy, and was therefore inclined to approach those powers most interested in resisting French aggression, Holland, England, and the Emperor. Oxenstjerna effected this dangerous change of system with singular skill.

On October 10, 1681, the important guarantee Treaty of the Hague was signed between Sweden and the Republic, which, ostensibly an additional guarantee of the Peace of Nimeguen, was secretly directed against France, being, in fact, the first step towards that policy of equilibrium afterwards so successfully pursued by William of Orange. A diplomatic competition between France and the allies immediately ensued. Louis XIV tried hard to dissolve the guarantee treaty by luring back his ancient confederate, Sweden; but Charles XI and his chancellor grew more instead of less hostile. In 1682 and 1683 Sweden won over the Emperor and Spain; but, on the other hand, England, Brandenburg, and Denmark acceded to France. A crisis seemed at hand when, early in 1683, Charles XI abruptly dismissed the French ambassador, Bazin; and a French fleet appeared in the Sound to cooperate with the

Danish navy against the half-finished arsenal of Carlsrona. Charles XI hastened to the coast; in July an auxiliary Dutch fleet anchored off Elfsborg—and the danger was over. Louis XIV had attempted to frighten Charles XI and failed; and the truce of Regensburg secured for a time the peace of Europe.

The next few years still further increased the influence of Sweden, and strengthened the hands of the allies. The Elector of Brandenburg, alarmed at the increasing high-handedness of Louis XIV, and anticipating the outbreak of a general European war, in the course of 1686 deserted France; and on July 9, 1686, Austria, Spain, Sweden, and Bavaria formed the League of Augsburg, nominally for the defence of their German possessions. Louis XIV, protesting against the league as being practically a declaration of war, began to make extensive military preparations; and in 1688 the struggle began which was to convulse the greater part of Europe for a whole decade. Previously to the outbreak of hostilities, Louis XIV once more, but in vain, had solicited the assistance of Charles XI; and a peace congress met at Altona to endeavour to settle the differences between Denmark and Holstein-Gottorp, which threatened a rupture between Sweden and Denmark, Louis XIV encouraging Christian V to resist the pressure of Sweden, while Charles XI as stoutly supported his kinsman the duke of Gottorp. Only when William of Orange, now king of England, threatened Christian V with an attack from the combined fleets of England and Holland, did Denmark give way. On June 30, 1689, by the Peace of Altona, the duke of Gottorp was reinstated in all his ancient rights. Thus the danger of war had again passed away; and Charles XI could return his half-drawn sword to its sheath. More than once during the ten years' struggle between France and the allies, he was strongly tempted to add to his military laurels, but the feeling that his first duty was to his country restrained him; and, while fulfilling his obligations to his allies, he succeeded in pre-

serving his neutrality to the end. Oxenstjerna, meanwhile, foreseeing the exhaustion of the belligerents, endeavoured to bring about a general peace. In the beginning of 1697 Sweden's mediation was officially accepted by the allies; and the great congress of Ryswick began its work.

Charles XI did not live to see the conclusion of the last peace congress over which Sweden was to preside. So early as the summer of 1696 the state of his health had caused great anxiety. Since the death of his beloved consort, Queen Ulrica Leonora, in July, 1693, he had been visibly a broken man; and the shadows seemed to grow darker around him as his strenuous life drew towards its premature close. A total failure of the crops, followed by pestilence and famine, visited Sweden during 1696 and 1697; and these calamities were the last tidings which reached the ears of the dying king, who expired on April 5, 1697, in his forty-first year.

After Gustavus Vasa and Gustavus Adolphus, Charles XI was perhaps the greatest of all the kings of Sweden. His modest, homespun figure has indeed been unduly eclipsed by the brilliant and colossal shapes of his heroic father and his meteoric son; yet, in reality, Charles XI is far worthier of admiration than either Charles X or Charles XII. He was in an eminent degree what neither of them ever was, a great master-builder. He found Sweden in ruins, and, deliberately, conscientiously, indefatigably, devoted his whole life to laying the solid foundations of a new order of things, which, in its essential features, has endured to the present day. Nay, more, the exploits of Charles XII would have been impossible but for the bracing moral discipline which the whole Swedish nation underwent at the hands of his father. The generation which grew up to manhood beneath the ubiquitous eye of the strenuous, God-fearing Charles XI, imbibed a sense of duty and a habit of obedience, the like of which can only be found (and that but for a short period) in Puritan England, and the fruits of which manifested themselves during the reign of his son in a self-sacrificing devotion unexampled in history.

CHAPTER XII.

CHARLES XII OF SWEDEN AND THE GREAT NORTHERN WAR, 1697-1721.

CHARLES XI had carefully provided against the contingency of his successor's minority ; and the five regents appointed by him entered upon their functions immediately after his death. The regents, if not great statesmen, were at least practical politicians, who had not been trained in the austere school of Charles XI in vain ; during the seven months in which they held sway no blunder was made, and no national interest was neglected. At home the Reduction was cautiously pursued, while abroad the successful conclusion of the great peace congress at Ryswick was justly regarded as a signal triumph of Sweden's pacific diplomacy. The young king, a lad of fifteen, was daily present in the council ; and his frequent utterances on every subject, except foreign affairs, showed, we are told, a maturity of judgment far beyond his years. He had been carefully educated by excellent tutors under the watchful eyes of both parents. His extraordinary courage and strength of character had, from the first, profoundly impressed those about him, though his dogged obstinacy occasionally tried them to the uttermost. His wise and loving mother was at great pains to develop his better nature by encouraging betimes those noble qualities, veracity, courtesy, piety, and a sense of honour and fair play, which were to distinguish him throughout life, while his precocious manliness was not a

little stimulated by the rude but bracing moral atmosphere to which he was accustomed from his infancy. Intellectually he was very highly endowed. His natural parts were excellent; and a strong bias in the direction of abstract thought, and mathematics in particular, was noticeable at an early date. His memory was astonishing. He could translate Latin into Swedish or German, or Swedish or German into Latin at sight, and on his campaigns not unfrequently dispensed with a key while inditing or interpreting ciphered despatches.

Charles XI personally supervised his son's physical training. He was taught to ride before he was four, and at eight was quite at home in the saddle. He brought down his bear at a single shot when only eleven, an incident which his father records in his private diary with evident satisfaction. In his later years it is always "with my son Carl" that Charles XI goes his rounds, reviewing troops, inspecting studs, foundries, dockyards, and granaries. Thus the boy was gradually initiated into all the *minutiae* of administration. For the science of war he had from the first a marked preference. As he grew older he took an active part in the misnamed sham fights in which Charles XI delighted, and which were often very serious affairs, plunging into the thickest of the *mêlée* with a recklessness which would have endangered his life but for his wariness and coolness. I am inclined to think that the influence of Charles XI over his son was far greater than is commonly supposed, and that it accounts for much in Charles XII's character which is otherwise inexplicable, such, for instance, as his precocious reserve and taciturnity, his dislike of everything French, and his inordinate contempt for purely diplomatic methods. Yet, on the whole, his early training was admirable; and, if only the young prince had been allowed the opportunity of gradually gaining experience, and developing his naturally great talents, for the next few years, beneath the guidance of his guardians, as Charles XI had intended, Sweden might still have been a great power. Unfortunately a sudden though

noiseless revolution was now to break down every safeguard, and make the young monarch absolute master of his country's fate.

On Saturday, November 6, 1697, the Swedish Riksdag assembled at Stockholm; and, on the following Monday, the Estate of Nobles, jealous of the authority of the regents, and making sure of the grateful liberality of a young prince unexpectedly released from the bonds of tutelage, sent a deputation to the king inviting him to take over the government of the realm. Charles received the delegates graciously, but suggested that on so important a matter the Senate should first be consulted. Accordingly, an hour later, a delegation of seventy-four noblemen, headed by their marshal, waited upon the Senate. The Senate and the regents, weakly determining not to lag behind the nobility in their devotion to the crown, waited upon the king forthwith; and Chancellor Oxenstjerna, acting as spokesman, begged his Majesty to gladden the hearts of his subjects by graciously assuming supreme power. Only when Charles had expressed his willingness to concur with the desires of his faithful subjects were the three lower estates of the realm formally acquainted with the action of the nobility, and invited to cooperate. The lower estates proved to be as obsequious as the gentry, for a joint deputation of all four estates thereupon proceeded incontinently to the palace; and in answer to their earnest solicitations, Charles declared that he could not resist their urgent appeal, but would take over the government of the realm "in God's name."

A short period of suspense ensued, followed by bitter disappointment. The Riksdag was dissolved after a three weeks' session; and a humble petition of the nobility for a remission of their burdens was curtly rejected. The subsequent coronation was marked by portentous novelties, the most significant of which was the king's omission to take the usual coronation oath, which was interpreted to mean that

he considered himself under no obligation to his subjects. The government now took more and more of an autocratic complexion. The French minister, D'Avaux, describes Charles at this period as even more imperious in public than his father. Anti-monarchical strictures, however respectful or indirect, were promptly and cruelly punished. Many people began to fear "*a hard reign.*" Yet, though individual self-seeking might be disappointed, the general opinion of the young king was favourable. His conduct was evidently regulated by strict principle and not by mere caprice. His refusal to countenance torture as an instrument of judicial investigation, on the ground that "*confessions so extorted give no sure criteria for forming a judgment,*" showed him to be more humane as well as more enlightened than the majority of his council, which had defended the contrary opinion. His intense application to affairs is noted by the English minister, Robinson, who informed his court that there was every prospect of a happy reign in Sweden, provided his Majesty were well served, and did not injure his health by too much work.

While Charles XII was thus serving his political apprenticeship at home with exemplary diligence, the political horizon abroad was darkening in every direction; and a league of apparently overwhelming strength had already been formed for the partition of Sweden.

The passionate desire of an exiled nobleman for vengeance and restitution was the primary cause of the war which was to devastate half Europe for nearly a generation. Ten years previously Johan Reinhold Patkul had proceeded from Riga to Stockholm as the spokesman of a deputation of Livonian gentry, to protest against the rigour with which the Reduction was being carried out in his native province. The ability with which he pleaded his cause favourably impressed Charles XI, but his representations were disregarded; and the offensive tone of a subsequent petition, which, in his wrath he addressed to the king, three years later, involved him in a trial for

high-treason. To save himself he fled to Switzerland; was condemned *in contumaciam* to lose his head; and his property was confiscated. In 1698, after vainly petitioning the new king, Charles XII, for pardon, he entered the service of the Elector of Saxony, with the double object of injuring Sweden and recovering his property.

We must be very cautious in speaking of the patriotism of Patkul. He acted exclusively on behalf of his noble caste, whose interests were identical with his own. Naturally enough he had no desire to remain a beggared exile for the rest of his life; but it was impossible for him to return to Livonia so long as Livonia belonged to Sweden. Of the independence of Livonia he had no thought. He simply wished to wrest it from one power in order to give it to another. To a feudal nobleman the aristocratic republic of Poland was obviously the most desirable suzerain for Livonia. There need be no fear of a "Reduction" in a commonwealth of aristocrats who refused to recognise either popular rights or sovereign authority. As a German, too, he naturally preferred the rule of a German prince; and the flighty, indolent, and luxurious Augustus, Elector of Saxony and king of Poland, was, from Patkul's point of view, an ideal ruler. Accordingly, in the course of 1698, the Livonian appeared at the court of Augustus, and for the next six months bombarded the Elector with projects and arguments for the dismemberment of Sweden, whose government he urged was now in the hands of an immature youth of seventeen. He proposed a league between Saxony, Denmark, and Brandenburg, to which the Tsar, Peter the Great, was to be invited to accede; but Patkul, apprehensive lest Russia "should snatch the roast from our spit, beneath our very eyes," insisted that Peter should be content with Ingria and Carelia, while Augustus was to secure Livonia, nominally for Poland, really for himself. Brandenburg was to be tempted by Pomerania, and Denmark by part of Bremen and Verden.

Augustus, whose one idea was to aggrandise his electorate, listened eagerly to the eloquent and energetic Livonian; and negotiations, conducted with the utmost secrecy, were at once begun in singularly favourable circumstances. In Denmark, Frederick IV, who succeeded his father Christian V on August 25, 1699, had excellent reasons for hating and fearing Sweden. For the last twenty years it had been the fixed policy of Swedish statesmen actively to support the dukes of Gottorp against Denmark; and Sweden's possessions in North Germany enabled her to invade Denmark from the south whenever she thought fit to do so, in which case Gottorp would infallibly render her valuable assistance. Thus the closer the union between Sweden and Gottorp, the more it behoved the Danish government to burst the iron chain which her neighbours had cast around her, especially after the marriage of Charles XII's favourite sister, Hedwig Sophia, to Frederick IV, duke of Gottorp (1698), for whom the young king at once conceived a strong affection. The Danish statesmen therefore gladly responded to Patkul's proposals; and, only a month after his accession, Frederick of Denmark concluded an offensive alliance against Sweden with Augustus II (Sept. 25, 1699), Augustus undertaking to invade Livonia in January or February of the ensuing year, while Frederick undertook to attack the Swedes simultaneously from Sleswick and from Norway.

This compact, however, was to be binding on neither party unless the Tsar acceded to it within three or four months. Patkul took care there should be no doubt about that. He set out at once for Moscow, and arrived there (Sept. 1699) simultaneously with an extraordinary Swedish embassy sent by Charles XII to renew the Peace of Kardis with Russia. The Tsar, to whom the regeneration of his country was a religion, could not resist the temptation of acquiring the coveted sea-board on the Baltic at apparently slight risk; and he displayed on this, as on so many similar occasions,

a calculating duplicity which is even more revolting than his outbursts of savagery, though in this respect it must be admitted he was no worse than his double-faced mentor and comrade, Augustus II. He not only assured the Swedish envoys that he would strictly observe all his treaties with Sweden, but protested that if Augustus dared to take Riga he would take it back from him. But at the very same time, at a secret conference at Preobrazhensk, a partition treaty was signed (November 21, 1699) between Russia, Denmark, and Saxony, whereby Augustus undertook to begin hostilities against Sweden by attacking Riga, while Peter promised to cooperate by invading Ingria as soon as his recent treaty of peace with the Sublime Porte had been officially confirmed. Of the three parties to this nefarious compact, neither Russia nor Saxony had the slightest cause of quarrel with the power so to be despoiled.

During the remainder of 1699 both Sweden and Denmark-Norway vigorously prepared for war. A Danish army, 17,800 strong, assembled in Holstein; while Charles XII equipped his fleet and mobilised a Swedish army-corps which was to penetrate into Holstein from Pomerania and Wismar. At this juncture western Europe was startled by the intelligence that the Saxons had invaded Livonia, but, unfortunately for them, they were repulsed from Riga; and the blow which was to have paralysed Sweden and compelled her to divert to the eastward the forces she required on her western front, failed utterly. The young king was now able to turn against his nearest enemy, Denmark. But in the meanwhile the Livonian invasion was the signal for Frederick IV also to begin hostilities against the duke of Gottorp; and his generals speedily demolished the newly erected fortifications in the Duchy, and laid siege to the Gottorp fortress of Tönning. But Tönning successfully held out; the advance of a Swedo-Lüneburg army compelled the Danes to march southwards to meet it; and the hostile armies faced each other without daring to risk a general engagement.

It was in another quarter that the decisive blow was to be struck. The bulk of the Danish troops had been sent to Holstein; but the Danish fleet of twenty-nine ships was considered quite strong enough to prevent the Swedes from making a descent upon Sjælland and the capital. Unfortunately the timidity of the Danish admiral Gyldenlöve now sacrificed Denmark's one advantage. William III, anxious to localise and if possible end the northern war which, on the eve of the determination of the Spanish Succession, was highly inconvenient to the western powers, had sent a combined Anglo-Dutch squadron to the Sound to put pressure upon Denmark, who, in view of her onslaught upon Gottorp, was regarded by the maritime powers as the aggressor. The combined squadron was inferior to the Danish fleet; yet Gyldenlöve permitted it to pass through the Sound (June, 1700) unmolested, contenting himself with taking up a position whence, as he supposed, he could prevent its union with the Swedish fleet of thirty-eight ships of the line approaching from Carlskrona. But the daring of the young Swedish king, who forced his nervous and protesting admiral to attempt the passage of the eastern channel of the Sound, the dangerous *Flinterend*, hitherto reputed to be unnavigable, traversed the plan of the Danish admiral. On July 6 a portion of the Swedish fleet actually passed through the *Flinterend*, and combined with the Anglo-Dutch squadrons in the neighbourhood of Landskrona. The Danish admiral thereupon sailed back to Copenhagen to cover the city from the sea-side; while Charles XII, on August 4, protected by the three fleets, effected a landing at Humleback in Sjælland, a few miles north of Copenhagen.

For a moment the Swedish king hoped to accomplish what his grandfather, fifty years before, had vainly attempted—the destruction of the Dano-Norwegian monarchy by capturing its capital. But, for once, prudential considerations prevailed. It would have taken time to transport siege artillery; the English and Dutch admirals not only refused to cooperate with Charles,

but threatened to attack his fleet if he persisted in his design; and Frederick IV, alarmed at the danger of his capital, hastily abandoned all his claims against Gottorp. In these circumstances Charles XII gave way; and the short and bloodless war was concluded by the Peace of Travendal, August 18, 1700. By this treaty Frederick IV conceded full sovereignty to the duke of Gottorp, with the right of maintaining an army and building fortresses, and paid him an indemnity of 200,000 rix-dollars, pledging himself besides to commit no hostilities against Sweden in the future, and, in particular, to furnish no assistance to Augustus II. The triumph of Charles, if not as complete as he desired, was at least remarkable. In a few weeks he had disarmed one of his three antagonists, and begun his military career in a manner which excited universal admiration. But the main advantage of this brilliant *début* was that it enabled him to give his undivided attention to the defence of his eastern borders, which had already been overrun by the semi-barbarous hordes of Tsar Peter.

On the same day that the Peace of Travendal was signed, Peter heard from Ukraianets, his envoy at Stambul, that the peace with the Porte had been ratified; and on the following day his army received marching orders. Peter decided, first of all, to attack the fortress of Narva, the key of Ingria, whence he could more easily join hands with Augustus, who was still operating before Riga. The Russian army, about 40,000 strong, appeared before Narva on Oct. 3, 1700; but, owing to general disorganisation and the difficulties of transport, it was not till Oct. 30 that the siege guns were able to open fire. On Nov. 27, Sheremetev, who had been detached to observe the enemy, brought tidings of the approach of the Swedish king with "an immense army"; and, the same night, Peter, "to whose nature unreflecting courage, the tendency needlessly to expose himself to danger, was absolutely foreign, convinced that his presence might be more profitable elsewhere," abandoned his raw levies, leaving a foreigner, the Duc de Croy, in command.

It was true that Charles XII was approaching; but his "immense army" consisted of barely 8000 men. On October 6 he had reached Pernau, with the intention of first relieving Riga, but, hearing that Narva was in great straits, he decided to turn northwards against the Tsar. After a five weeks' sojourn at Wesenburg, to collect his forces, he set out for Narva on November 13, against the advice of all his generals, who feared the effect on untried troops of a week's march through a wasted land, along boggy roads guarded by no fewer than three formidable passes, which a little engineering skill could easily have made impregnable. Fortunately the two first passes were unoccupied; and the third, Pyhäjoggi, which Sheremetev attempted to defend with 6000 men, was captured by Charles in person, at the head of 400 horsemen. On the 19th of November the little army reached Lagena, a village about nine miles from Narva, whence it signalled its approach to the beleaguered fortress, and early on the following morning it advanced in battle array. The attack on the Russian fortified camp began at two o'clock in the afternoon, in the midst of a violent snow-storm; and by nightfall the whole position was in the hands of the Swedes. On the 21st the scattered remnant of the Russian troops, who still outnumbered the Swedes, three to one, surrendered unconditionally. The triumph was as cheap as it was crushing; it cost Charles less than 2000 men.

After Narva Charles XII stood at the parting of the ways. His best advisers urged him to turn all his forces against the fugitive, panic-stricken Moscovites; to go into winter quarters amongst them, and live at their expense; to fan into a flame the smouldering discontent caused by the Petrine reforms (which exploded a little later in the revolt of the Cossacks and the Astrakhan rebellion); and so to disable Moscow as to make her incapable of meddling with any but semi-barbarous Asiatics for some time to come. Fortunately for the Tsar, Charles's determination promptly to punish the treachery of Augustus

prevailed over every other consideration. In one respect his first victory had been very mischievous, inspiring him as it did with an unjustifiable disdain of his great rival, Peter. In December the Swedish army went into winter quarters around Dorpat; and Charles fixed his head-quarters at Lais Castle, midway between Dorpat and Lake Peipus, so as to be able to commence hostilities against his third enemy in the early spring.

Meanwhile, an event occurred which completely changed the face of European politics. In November, 1700, died Charles II of Spain, bequeathing the whole of the possessions of the Spanish monarchy to Philip of Anjou, the second grandson of Louis XIV, who thereupon openly repudiated the partition compact which he had made with the maritime powers, and declared his intention of putting his grandson into the full possession of his rights. A war between France and the maritime powers was now only a question of time; and both sides looked to Sweden for assistance. The competing French and Imperial ambassadors appeared in the Swedish camp, while the English and Dutch ministers were equally busy at Stockholm. The chancellor, Benedict Oxenstjerna, saw in this universal bidding for the favour of Sweden a golden opportunity of ending "this present lean war, and making his Majesty the arbiter of Europe"; but Charles met all the representations of his ministers with a dogged, disconcerting silence. At last the urgent appeal of Baron Lillieroth, his minister at the Hague, who stated that both William III and the grand pensionary Heinsius were uneasy at the unnecessary prolongation of the northern war, and desirous of knowing the real sentiments of his Majesty, drew from him the reluctant reply, "It would put our glory to shame if we lent ourselves to the slightest treaty accommodation with one who hath so vilely prostituted his honour." This obvious reference to Augustus convinced the diplomatists of western Europe that nothing was to be expected from the king of Sweden till he had avenged himself on the Elector of Saxony.

It is easy from the vantage point of two centuries to criticise Charles XII for neglecting the Moscovites to pursue the Saxons; but, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, his decision was natural enough. The question was, which of the two foes was the most dangerous; and Charles had every reason to think the civilised and martial Saxons far more formidable than the imbecile Moscovites. He was also justified in hating Augustus more than his other enemies. The hostility of Denmark on account of Gottorp was perfectly intelligible. Equally intelligible was the hostility of Moscow. How could Moscow be anything but hostile so long as Sweden held old Moscovite territory, and barred her from the sea? But there was no excuse at all for the hostility of the Elector of Saxony. Yet he had been the first to listen to Patkul; he had been the prime mover in the league of partition; he had deceived Sweden up to the very last moment with lying assurances of amity. As Charles XII wrote to Louis XIV, the conduct of Augustus had been so abominable as to deserve the vengeance of God, and the contempt of all honest people. Charles rightly felt that he could never trust Augustus to remain quiet even if he made peace with him. To leave such a foe in his rear, while he plunged into the heart of Moscow, would have been hazardous indeed. From this point of view Charles's whole Polish policy, which has been blamed so long and so loudly—the policy of placing a nominee of his own on the Polish throne in lieu of Augustus—takes quite another complexion: it was a policy not of overvaulting ambition, but of prudential self-defence.

First, however, Charles had to clear Livonia of the invader. This he accomplished on July 8, 1701, when he transported his army from Riga across the Dwina, on flat-bottomed barges, in the face of 30,000 Russians and Saxons strongly entrenched on the opposite shore at Dunamünde, routing them in a two hours' engagement, and following up his victory by occupying the duchy of Courland, then a Polish fief, which he at once

converted into a Swedish governor-generalship. All the Swedish fortresses on the Dwina were then recaptured ; the land was purged of Saxons and Russians in every direction ; and Charles went into winter-quarters in western Courland around Würgen, from the middle of September to the end of December, 1701.

Charles's proximity to the Polish border had greatly disturbed Augustus ; and, at his request, Cardinal Radziejowski, the primate of Poland, had written to the Swedish monarch, reminding him that Poland was at peace with Sweden ; forbidding him, in the name of the republic, to cross the frontier, and offering to mediate between the two monarchs. Charles's reply excluded every hope of negotiation. He bluntly demanded the deposition of Augustus, threatening, in case of non-compliance, to punish the foe himself. After this it is not surprising that a reaction in favour of Augustus began in Poland itself ; and Patkul, who in 1702 had exchanged the Saxon for the Russian service, did all in his power to induce the republic to join the anti-Swedish league. A peace was patched up between Poland and Russia ; a Russian army corps was sent to support Augustus, with whom the Tsar now concluded a fresh offensive and defensive alliance ; and it became clear that, excepting the powerful Lithuanian family of Sapieha, which in September, 1701, placed itself under Swedish protection, the majority of the Polish aristocracy was still on the side of the king actually in possession.

But Augustus had very little stomach for further fighting. During the winter of 1701 he had knocked at the door of every European court for assistance ; and the maritime powers in particular had employed their good offices on his behalf. William III even went so far as to write to Charles XII personally, urging him to make peace at once on his own terms. William had just succeeded in forming the Grand Alliance of the Hague (Sept. 1701) which bound the neutral powers to resist to the uttermost the pretensions of Louis XIV ; and the

Grand Alliance was as eager to obtain the co-operation of the Swedish hero as was Louis XIV, who also spared no pains to win over Charles to his side. But Charles resolutely went his own way. In January, 1702, he established himself at Bielovice in Lithuania, and, after issuing a proclamation declaring that the "Elector of Saxony" had forfeited the Polish throne, set out for Warsaw, which he reached on May 14. The cardinal-primate was then sent for and commanded to summon a *Sejm*, for the purpose of deposing Augustus. A fortnight later Charles quitted Warsaw, to seek "the Elector of Saxony," and on July 2, with only 10,000 men, utterly defeated the combined Poles and Saxons at Clissow. Three weeks later, Charles, with only a cane in his hand, stood before the fortress of Cracow, which he captured by an act of almost fabulous audacity. Thus, within four months of the opening of the campaign, the Polish capital and the coronation city were both in the possession of the Swedes.

For the next two months Charles remained inactive at Cracow, awaiting reinforcements, and regarding impassively the chaotic condition of the unhappy Polish republic, which, with Lithuania wrapped in the flames of civil war, with *jacqueries* ravaging Red Russia and the Ukraine, and Swedes and Saxons blackmailing every province of what purported to be an independent country at peace with them both, seemed to be on the verge of dissolution. It is due to Augustus to say that, after Clissow, he made every effort to put an end to the war. But his offers were not even considered, Charles opposing an obstinate silence to every demonstration of the futility and hazardousness of persisting in his Polish dethronisation project. By this time, too, he had conceived a passion for the perils and adventures of warfare. Henceforth it was the life he loved best. His character was hardening, and he deliberately adopted the most barbarous expedients for converting the Augustan Poles to his views. Such commands

as "ravage, singe, and burn all about, and reduce the whole district to a wilderness!"—"sweat contributions well out of them!"—"rather let the innocent suffer than the guilty escape"¹!—became painfully frequent in the mouth of the young commander, not yet twenty-one, who was far from being naturally cruel.

The campaign of 1703 was remarkable for Charles's victory over the Saxons at Pultusk (April 21), and for the long siege of Thorn, which occupied the Swedish king for eight months, but cost him only fifty men, after which he went into winter-quarters round Heilberg, in the diocese of Ermeland. Meanwhile his Polish partisans had succeeded in forming a General Confederation, under the protection of the Swedish general Rehnskjöld, which assembled at Warsaw in January, 1704, and was energetically manipulated by Count Arvid Horn, Charles's special envoy, who persuaded it to depose Augustus. But months of fruitless negotiation ensued before Augustus's successor could be fixed upon, Augustus himself complicating matters by seizing the Sobieskis, the most acceptable candidates, in Imperial territory, and locking them up in the fortress of Pleissenburg. Charles finally cut the knot himself by selecting the Palatine of Posen, Stanislaus Leszczynski, a young man of blameless antecedents, respectable talents, and ancient family, but certainly without sufficient force of character or political influence to sustain himself on such an unstable throne. Nevertheless, with the assistance of a bribing fund and an army corps, Count Horn succeeded in procuring the election of Stanislaus on July 2, 1704, by a scratch assembly of half-a-dozen Castellans and a few score of the lesser nobility.

The insecurity of the new king was demonstrated to all the world when Augustus, taking advantage of a sudden raid of Charles's southwards, recaptured Warsaw (Aug. 26),

¹ Charles XII: *Egenh. Bref.* pp. 160, 162, 201.

Stanislaus escaping by circuitous routes to Rehnskjöld's camp in Great Poland. But Augustus's triumph was of short duration. In October Charles again routed the Saxons at Punitz, and, after chasing them as far as Glogau, returned to Poland and pitched his camp at Ravitz on the Saxon frontier, completely cutting Augustus off from Poland. There he remained for eight months, using every effort firmly to establish Stanislaus. A coronation Diet was summoned to Warsaw in July, 1705; an attempt to disperse it by an army of 10,000 Saxons was frustrated by the Swedish general, Nieroth, with 2,000 men; the difficulty about the regalia, which had been carried off to Saxony, was surmounted by Charles himself providing his nominee with a new crown and sceptre: and, finally, Stanislaus was crowned king, with great splendour, on September 24, 1705.

The first act of the new king was to conclude an alliance between Sweden and the Polish republic, on the basis of the Peace of Oliva, whereby Poland engaged to assist Sweden against the Tsar. Late in the autumn Charles set off to encounter General Ogilvie, a Scotsman, whom the indefatigable Patkul had picked up at Vienna, and engaged to serve the Tsar for five years. Ogilvie had invaded Lithuania with 20,000 Russians, and occupied the fortress of Grodno. At the beginning of January, 1706, Charles appeared before Grodno, and there blockaded the whole Russian army for two months, to the terror of the Tsar, who implored his "good brother" Augustus to make a diversion in the West. Augustus thereupon sent Schulenburg with 20,000 Saxons and Russians to attack the little Swedish army under Rehnskjöld, which had been left behind to secure Poland and watch Saxony, but Rehnskjöld suddenly assumed the offensive and routed Schulenburg at Fraustadt, a feat which well merited the marshal's bâton bestowed upon him by his grateful master. Charles himself was pursuing Ogilvie, who had contrived to escape from Grodno, and was making for Kiev, where the Tsar

was anxiously awaiting him. The sudden break-up of the ice on the Niemen prevented the Swedes from crossing, and gave Ogilvie a start of some days which Charles was unable to make good. He abandoned the pursuit at Pinsk, where he allowed his exhausted soldiers a month's rest; then speeding westwards, he joined Rehnskjöld at Strykow in Great Poland, and, on August 5, 1706, crossed the Vistula and entered Saxony.

At this very time the war of the Spanish Succession was approaching a crisis. The belligerents were so evenly balanced that the slightest deflection of the political scales meant fatal disaster for one of them. It is true that Marlborough had crushed Villeroi at Ramillies, not long before Charles's irruption into Saxony, while Eugene, shortly after it, had rescued Italy from the French by the victory of Turin; but the subsequent successes of Villars and Vendôme in Germany, and of Berwick in Spain, showed that the resources of Louis XIV were still far from being exhausted. The sudden apparition of the king of Sweden and his "blue boys" in the heart of the Empire fluttered all the western diplomatists. The Allies, in particular, at once suspected that Louis XIV had bought the Swedes. Marlborough was forthwith sent from the Hague to the castle of Alt-Ranstadt, near Leipsic, where Charles had fixed his head-quarters, "to endeavour to penetrate the designs" of the king of Sweden. He soon convinced himself that western Europe had nothing to fear from Charles, and that no bribes were necessary to turn the Swedish arms from Germany to Moscow.

Five months later (Sept. 1707) Augustus was forced to sign the Peace of Alt-Ranstadt, whereby he not only resigned the Polish crown but engaged to renounce every anti-Swedish alliance, and to hand over all deserters, especially Patkul. A month afterwards Patkul was condemned by a court-martial at Casimir to be quartered alive, and endured his well-merited punishment heroically. Nevertheless, humiliating as it was to Augustus, the Peace of Alt-Ranstadt

brought no advantage to Sweden, no compensation for the heavy expenses of the last six years, and was therefore politically condemnable. Charles's departure from Saxony was delayed for twelve months by a quarrel with the Emperor, against whom he had many just causes of complaint. The religious question presented the most difficulty. The court of Vienna had treated the Silesian Protestants with tyrannical severity, in direct contravention of the Treaty of Osnabrück, of which Sweden was one of the guarantors; and Charles demanded summary and complete restitution so dictatorially that the Emperor prepared for war. But political considerations prevailed. Charles's presence in central Europe seriously hampered the movements of the Allies; and the fear lest Charles might be tempted to assist France, the traditional ally of the Swedish monarchy, finally induced the Emperor to satisfy all his demands, the maritime powers at the same time agreeing to guarantee the provisions of the Peace of Alt-Ranstadt. Nothing now prevented the king of Sweden from turning his victorious arms against the Tsar; and on August 23, 1707, he evacuated Saxony at the head of the largest host he ever commanded, consisting of 24,000 horse and 20,000 foot, two-thirds of whom were veterans.

It was high time that Charles XII should hasten eastwards, for two of Sweden's four Baltic provinces were already lost. With the mechanical persistence of some vast, sluggish, but overwhelming force of nature, irresistibly breaking down every artificial barrier in its way, the Russians had at length succeeded in forcing their way to the sea. Impoverished and devastated, denuded of troops, Ingria, Estonia, and Livonia had but a poor chance of stemming the Moscovite flood. Three little handfuls of half-starving ragamuffins, dignified by the name of army-corps, could not seriously hope to defend against a tenfold odds a frontier extending from Lake Ladoga to Lake Peipus, from Lake Peipus to the Dwina, and from the Dwina to the Gulf of Riga. Only beneath the walls of the

fortresses did the invader meet with any prolonged resistance ; and the fortresses themselves, ill-provisioned, under-manned, half in ruins, would have surrendered at the first summons had they not been defended by veteran soldiers of heroic antecedents. Deliberately, warily, Peter advanced, feeling his way step by step, taking the minimum of risk, retreating without hesitation whenever it was necessary, but never idle, never discouraged, retrieving losses in one direction by fresh gains in another. Repulsed from Livonia by the gallant Schliffenbach in the summer of 1701, he was back again in the early spring of 1702, ravaging both Ingria and Livonia, driving the Lilliputian Swedish armies before him ; and in the autumn his perseverance was rewarded by the capture of the fortress of Nöteberg, now Schlüsselburg, the key of Ladoga. In 1703 he took the fortress of Nyen at the head of the Gulf of Finland ; and a fortnight later, a little lower down the Neva, on the island of Jenisaari, were laid the foundations of a Russian fortress which the Tsar called after himself. By the end of the same year all Ingria was in his hands. Emboldened by these successes, Peter, in 1704, simultaneously laid siege to Dorpat, the central fortress of Livonia, and Narva, the bulwark of Sweden's eastern frontier. Dorpat fell after a determined resistance of six weeks, which cost Peter 5000 men. The Swedish Senate, which, after the fall of Nyen, had received permission from Charles XII to reinforce the Baltic provinces, too late made strenuous efforts to save Narva, which, after a heroic resistance of six months, was stormed on August 7, 1704, three thousand Russians perishing in the breach. During 1705 the Swedes were too feeble to do more than prevent the Russian Ladoga fleet from entering the Baltic, while three expeditions undertaken against Petersburg failed utterly. Riga was saved only by the genius of General Adam Levenhaupt, who won a whole series of astonishing victories over the combined Russians, Poles, and Saxons, who outnumbered him by two to one ; the most notable of these conflicts were the battle

of Jakobstadt in 1704, and that of Gemauerhof, on June 16, 1705. Levenhaupt then fell back upon Riga; and during 1706 and 1707 the Baltic provinces were spared any further invasion, for the intelligence that at last Charles was advancing against him sufficed to recall the Tsar to the defence of his own dominions.

It was with undisguised apprehension that Peter watched the advance of the invincible king of Sweden. Every diplomatic means of reconciliation had been exhausted beforehand. In January, 1706, through the Dutch resident, Van der Hulst, Peter had promised the western powers 30,000 of his best troops to be employed against Louis XIV, if only they would mediate a peace for him with Sweden. He repeated the offer at the end of the same year through A. A. Matvyeev, his minister at London. On both occasions his overtures were rejected. The Allies evidently did not believe in the efficiency of the Moscovite troops. Matvyeev was next instructed to bribe Godolphin, Harley, and the other English ministers; but they proved inaccessible. Peter had better hopes at first of the omnipotent Marlborough. The negotiations with the duke were conducted by the Dutchman Huyssens, one of the Tsar's confidential agents; and Marlborough seems to have stipulated for a principality in Russia. Peter offered him the choice between Kiev, Vladimir, and Siberia; and in case he actually brought about a peace with Sweden, he was to have besides an annual pension of 50,000 thalers, "a rock ruby, such as no European potentate possesses," and the Order of St Andrew in brilliants. The magnitude of Peter's fears may be gauged by the modesty of the conditions that he proposed. He was now prepared to surrender all his acquisitions, Narva included, except the mouth of the river Neva, and a strip of land on each side of it—so he euphemistically termed Petersburg and its cordon of dependent fortresses. Charles, well aware that the possession of the Neva was vital, demanded the unconditional retrocession of all conquests together with an adequate war

indemnity ; but Peter was resolved to perish rather than abandon his "Paradise," as he called Petersburg. The Tsar was equally unsuccessful at Paris, Rome, and Vienna. His Baltic conquests had alarmed both the maritime and the German powers, who feared that Russia's aggrandisement would, as the Swedish ministers suggested, expose the rest of Europe "to the danger of a Scythian invasion." Prince Eugene, to whom the Tsar offered the Polish throne, declined the dangerous gift. Peter now saw himself thrown entirely on his own resources. His measures were promptly taken. At a council of war, held at the little village of Mereczko, it was resolved not to meet Charles in the open field, but to retire before him, devastating the surrounding country, and only offering resistance at the passage of the rivers he might have to cross. The gentry and peasantry were ordered to bury their corn in pits or in the woods, and drive their live stock into the trackless morasses, so as to deprive the advancing foe of sustenance.

Delayed during the autumn months in Poland by the tardy arrival of reinforcements from Pomerania, it was not till November, 1707, that Charles XII was able to take the field. The respite was of incalculable importance to the Tsar, who, at the very time of the Swedish advance from the west had suddenly to cope with a dangerous Bashkir rising on the Volga, followed by a rebellion of the Don Cossacks. So hardly pressed was he as to be forced to employ barbarians against barbarians, Calmucks against Bashkirs, for want of regular troops. On Christmas Day, 1707, Charles reached the Vistula, which he crossed on New Year's Day, 1708, though the ice was in a dangerous condition. Peter had intended to entrench himself behind the Memel at Grodno ; but Charles, advancing with incredible swiftness, snatched the fortress from his very grasp, and after a brief rest at Smorganie, proceeded towards Moscow by way of Minsk and Smolensk. The superior strategy of the Swedes enabled them to cross the first two considerable rivers, the Berezina and the Drucz, without difficulty ; but on

reaching the Wabis Charles found the enemy posted on the opposite side, near the little town of Holowczyn, in an apparently impregnable position, and evidently bent upon barring his passage. But his experienced eye instantly detected the one vulnerable point in the six mile long Russian line; on July 4 he hurled all his forces against it; and after a fierce engagement, lasting from daybreak to sundown, the Russians retired with the loss of 3000 men.

The victory of Holowczyn, memorable besides as the last pitched battle won by Charles XII, opened up the way to the Dnieper; and four days later Charles reached Mohilev, where he stayed till August 6. The Swedish army now began to suffer severely, bread and fodder running short, and the soldiers subsisting almost entirely on captured bullocks. Peter, who would not risk another general engagement, slowly retired before the invaders, burning and destroying everything in his path, till at last the Swedes had nothing but a charred wilderness beneath their feet, and an horizon of burning villages before their eyes. Moreover the Moscovites now displayed a boldness which amazed the Swedes, attacking more and more frequently and obstinately every week, with ever increasing numbers. By the time the Russian frontier was reached at Miczanowicz, on September 20, it was plain to Charles himself that Moscow was inaccessible. At a council of war held at Tatarsk, Rehnskjöld prudently advised the king to await the arrival of Levenhaupt, who was advancing from Riga with reinforcements and seven hundred waggons of stores, and then to proceed along the Dwina to Livonia, and go into winter-quarters in his own lands, so as to be able to renew the war advantageously the following year. But Charles, to whom the idea of a retreat was intolerable, determined to march southwards instead of northwards, and join his forces with those of the rebel Hetman of the Dnieperian Cossacks, Ivan Mazepa, who had placed his fruitful and unravaged dominions in the Ukraine at Charles's disposal,

and promised to join him with 100,000 light horsemen and be his guide. But not a moment was to be lost : Baturin, the Hetman's stronghold and treasury, was already threatened by the Moscovites, and must be saved at all hazards. Charles was readily persuaded to embark on a fresh adventure ; and to it everything else was sacrificed. Levenhaupt, hampered by his caravan, and sorely harassed by the Moscovites, was left to follow the king as best he could.

And now began that last march of the devoted Swedish army from Mohilev, through the forests and morasses of Severia and the endless steppes of the Ukraine, which was to be a long drawn-out agony punctuated by a constant succession of disasters. The first blow fell in the beginning of October, when the unhappy Levenhaupt joined Charles with the *débris* of the army he had saved from the not inglorious rout of Lesna, where the Tsar with fourfold odds had intercepted and overwhelmed him after a two days' battle. "We had hoped," says an eye-witness, "that he would have brought us food, drink, and clothes; but he came empty-handed, and utterly bewildered at the sudden change of fortune." And Levenhaupt had been sacrificed in vain ; for when, on November 8, Mazepa at last joined Charles, at the little Severian town of Horki, he came not as the powerful "*Dux militum Zaporowiensium et utram ripam Borysthenis incolentium*," but as a ruined man with little more than his horse-tail standard, and 1300 personal adherents. The Tsar, outmarching the exhausted Swedes, had already (Nov. 13) captured and destroyed Baturin ; and when Charles, a week later, passed it by, all that remained of the Cossack capital was "a heap of smouldering mills and ruined houses, with burnt, half-burnt, and bloody corpses" scattered all around.

The very elements now began to fight against the perishing but still unconquered host. The winter of 1708 was the severest that Europe had known for a century. So early as the beginning of October the cold was intense ; by November 1

fire-wood would not ignite in the open air, and the soldiers warmed themselves over huge bonfires of straw ; but it was not till the vast open steppes of the Ukraine were reached that the unhappy Swedes experienced all the rigour of the icy Scythian blast. By the time the army arrived at the little Ukrainian fortress of Hadjach, in January, 1709, wine and spirits froze into solid masses of ice ; birds on the wing fell dead ; saliva congealed on its passage from the mouth to the ground. Hideous were the sufferings of the soldiers. " You could see," says an eye-witness, " some without hands, some without feet, some without ears and noses, many creeping along after the manner of quadrupeds." " Nevertheless," says another narrator, " though earth, sky, and air were now against us, the king's orders had to be obeyed and the daily march made." Never had Charles XII seemed so superhuman as during these awful days. It is not too much to say that his imperturbable equanimity, his serene *bonhomie*, kept the host together. His military exploits were prodigious. At Cerkova he defeated 7000 Russians with 400, and at Opressa 5000 Russians with 300 men. His soldiers believed him to be divinely inspired and divinely protected. But, though he cheerfully shared their hardships, it is to be feared that he lightly regarded their sufferings. " This winter has been very cold," he wrote to his sister Ulrica, " and the frost has almost seemed to be severe, inasmuch as several of the enemy as well as of our own people have been frozen to death, or lost part of their hands, feet, and noses. Yet, for all that, this winter has been a merry winter too. For, though some have been unlucky, we have always managed to find a little pastime." This was neither brutality nor bravado, but the determination to make light of his risks—an habitual trait in the character of Charles XII.

The frost broke at the end of February, 1709 ; and then the spring floods put an end to all active operations for some months. The Tsar set off for Voronets, to inspect his Black Sea fleet, while Charles encamped at Rudiszcze, between the

Prol and the Wosskla, two tributaries of the Don. By this time the Swedish army had dwindled from 41,000 to 20,000 able-bodied men, mostly cavalry. Supplies, furnished for a time by Mazepa, were again running short. All communications with Europe had long since been cut off. To gain time Charles resolved to capture the fortress of Pultawa, make it a base for subsequent operations, and there await the reinforcements he expected from Poland and Sweden. The siege began in May, but soon had to be converted into a blockade for want of gunpowder; and on the other side of the river lay 80,000 watchful but still cautious Moscovites. On June 17 Charles's foot was pierced by a bullet, which placed him *hors de combat*. No sooner did Peter hear of the accident than he threw the greater part of his forces over the river, but took the precaution to entrench them (June 19—25). On June 26 Charles held a council of war, at which it was resolved to attack the Russians in their entrenchments on the following day. The Swedes joyfully accepted the chances of battle to escape from slow starvation and manifold misery, and, advancing with irresistible *élan*, were at first successful on both wings. Then one or two tactical blunders were committed; and the Tsar, taking courage, enveloped the little band in a vast semicircle bristling with the most modern guns, the invention of a French engineer, Le Metre, which fired five times to the Swedes' once, and literally swept away the Royal Guards, the heart and soul of the army, before they could grasp their swords. After a bitter struggle the Swedish infantry was well-nigh annihilated, while the 14,000 cavalry, exhausted and demoralised, surrendered two days later at Perewoloczna on the Dnieper. Charles himself, with 1500 horsemen, took refuge in Turkish territory. "Now, by God's help, the foundation-stone of St Petersburg is laid once for all," wrote Peter to Apraksin, when the struggle was over. At the end of the year, on his return to "the Holy Land," he ordered a church dedicated to

¹ i.e. St Petersburg.

St Sampson to be built there, to commemorate the victory of Pultawa.

The catastrophe of Pultawa was not, as has commonly been supposed, a mortal blow to the Swedish empire, though its immediate effect was to neutralise all Charles's previous advantages and revive the hostile league against him. Even before the battle, Augustus of Saxony, foreseeing the impending calamity, had already (June 28) signed at Dresden a convention with Frederick IV of Denmark directed against Sweden, but expressly excluding her German provinces from its operation, so as to reassure the Emperor and the maritime powers, who were not disposed to part with the Danish and Saxon mercenaries actually fighting their battles against France. The avowed object of this convention was to restore the equilibrium of the North, and confine Sweden "within her legitimate boundaries"; but two secret articles provided for the territorial aggrandisement of Augustus at the expense of the Polish republic, and the reduction of the duke of Gottorp to his former subservience to Denmark. The two kings then proceeded to Berlin to attempt to win over the king of Prussia to the new league; but not even the promise of the Polish province of West Prussia could tempt Frederick I to depart from his cautious neutrality. Then came the tidings of Pultawa, and, in an instant, the authority of King Stanislaus vanished like a dream at the first touch of reality. The vast majority of the Poles hastened to repudiate him, and make their peace with Augustus; and Leszczynski, henceforth a mere pensioner of Charles XII, accompanied Krassau's army corps in its retreat to Swedish Pomerania.

But with the recovery of Poland the allies had to be content. Much had been hoped from the co-operation of the Tsar; but unfortunately Peter was so puffed up by his great victory that he was now disposed to assist his confederates not more, but far less, than heretofore. He renewed, indeed, his anti-Swedish alliance with Augustus (Treaty of

Thorn, Oct. 7, 1709) at Yaroslav, on June 10, 1710; but shrewdly guessing that Denmark would now seize her opportunity and attack Sweden in any case, he refused to waste any money upon her. As he had anticipated, Denmark was only too glad to join the anti-Swedish league for nothing (Treaty of Copenhagen, Oct. 22, 1709). Frederick IV, against the advice of his wisest counsellors, had resolved to attack Sweden at the very time when the Tsar was harrying the remnant of her Baltic provinces. The temptation to shake off, once for all, the galling, crippling supremacy of a secular foe proved irresistible. Success was taken for granted. It was thought that "nothing now was left of the lion but his claws." But Sweden was once more to shew the world that a military state whose martial traditions and strong central organisation enabled her to mobilise troops more quickly than her neighbours, was not to be overthrown by a single disaster. Despite her terrible losses in Russia, she could still oppose 16,400 well-disciplined troops to the Danish invader; and these troops were commanded by Count Magnus Stenbock, the last but not the least of the three great Caroline captains¹. Her fleet, too, was a little stronger than the fleet of Denmark-Norway; and besides her garrisons in Stralsund, Wismar, Bremen, Verden, and other places, she had, as we have seen, an army-corps of 9000 men in Pomerania. On November 12, 1709, 15,000 Danes landed in Scania, at Raa, south of Helsingborg; a Norwegian army-corps, advancing from the north-west, was to co-operate simultaneously. At first the Swedes were too weak to offer any resistance, and allowed the Danes to advance into the heart of Scania; but the non-appearance of the Norwegian auxiliary corps compelled the Danish commander to retreat, and on March 10 he was attacked and routed by Stenbock at Helsingborg, whereupon the Danes hastily evacuated Sweden. Yet, failure though it

¹ The other two were Rehnskjöld and Levenhaupt.

was, the short Scanian campaign had been of material assistance to the Tsar. It had prevented the Swedish government from sending help to its hard-pressed eastern provinces, and thus given Peter a free hand in that direction. Riga was starved into surrender on July 15, 1710; in the two following months fell Pernau and Reval, and with them all the Swedish dominions south of the Gulf of Riga. Finland was also invaded, and the fortress of Viborg was captured in June.

But alarming news from the south suddenly interrupted the Tsar's career of conquest in the north. On receiving the tidings of Pultawa, Peter Tolstoi, the Moscovite ambassador at Stambul, imprudently demanded the instant extradition of Charles and Mazepa, who had been received with royal honours and hospitably entertained by the pasha of Bender. But the Turks, thoroughly alarmed at the unexpected triumph of the Russians, began making extensive military preparations with extreme haste; and Tolstoi's subsequent attempt in August, 1709, to bribe the Grand Mufti with 10,000 ducats and a thousand precious sables, so as to procure the surrender of the fugitives, failed. Nor was Charles XII idle. For the first time in his life he was obliged to have recourse to diplomacy; and his pen now proved almost as formidable as his sword. His agents at Stambul, Poniatowski, Funck, and Neugebauer, proved fully a match for Tolstoi; and 80,000 ducats which the king had inherited from Mazepa (who had died on March 10, 1710), together with 100,000 thalers received from Holstein, provided him with the indispensable bribing fund. The struggle between the Swedish and the Russian ministers at Stambul now became acute. At first Tolstoi prevailed; and in November, 1709, the Russo-Turkish truce was renewed. But in January, 1710, Poniatowski succeeded in privately delivering into the Sultan's own hands a memorial by Charles XII, in which the cupidity of the grand vizier, Ali Pasha, and the designs of the Moscovites, were drastically delineated; and in June, 1710, Ali was superseded by Neuman-Köprili, whose first act was to lend

Charles 400,000 thalers without interest. Köprili, however, was too pacific both for Charles and for the Janissaries, who now clamoured to be led against the Moscovite, so he also was supplanted by Baltaji Mehemet Pasha. In October the Tsar, anxious to know the worst, categorically demanded whether the Porte wanted peace or war. The Porte responded by throwing Tolstoi into the Seven Towers; and the grand vizier set out for the frontier at the head of a large army.

On March 8, 1710, war was openly declared against "the enemies of the name of Christ" at Moscow; and, some days later, Peter joined the army. His preparations were manifestly inadequate, but he relied to a great extent on a general rising of the orthodox Christians in the Turkish dominions to prevent the grand vizier from crossing the Danube before he himself reached the Dniester. All his calculations fell through. By the time he arrived at Jassy (July 5, 1710) he realised that he must rely entirely on his own limited resources. The question of supplies now became so pressing that all strategical considerations had to be subordinated thereto. On the rumour that an immense quantity of provisions had been hidden by the Turks in the marshes of Fulchi, near Braila, Peter crossed the Pruth, and proceeded in search of them through the forests on the banks of the Sereth. But on July 17 the advance-guard reported the approach of the grand vizier; and the whole army hurried back to the Pruth, fighting rear-guard actions all the way. On July 19 the Moscovites, now reduced to 38,000 men, entrenched themselves; and the same evening 190,000 Turks and Tartars, with 300 guns, appeared and beleaguered them on both sides of the Pruth. Peter was now absolutely at the mercy of the grand vizier. Had Baltaji remained where he was for a week, he could have starved the Moscovites into surrender without losing a man or firing a shot. "But," as Charles XII well expressed it, "he seemed to have more regard for the conservation of the enemy's army than for the advantage of the Ottoman Porte"; and in consi-

deration of the sum of 250,000 rubles he allowed the Tsar and his army to escape; Peter undertaking by the Peace of the Pruth (July 22, 1711) to demolish the fortresses of Azov and Taganrog, to withdraw his troops for ever from Poland, and to allow the king of Sweden a free passage to his own domains.

Two days before the Russian army departed, Charles XII, who had provided the grand vizier with a plan of campaign beforehand, arrived on the banks of the Pruth to see the *coup-de-grâce* duly administered, and only then received the unwelcome news that peace was already concluded. Even now he did not abandon the struggle. Skilfully taking advantage of the Tsar's delay in demolishing Azov and evacuating Poland, he procured the dismissal of two more grand viziers, and induced the Porte to declare war against Russia a second and a third time (Nov. 1711 and Nov. 1712). But the Porte had no more money to spare; and, the Tsar making a show of submission, the Sultan began to regard Charles as a troublesome guest. On February 1, 1713, he was attacked by the Turks in his camp at Bender, and made prisoner after a contest which reads more like an extravagant episode from some heroic folk-tale than an incident of sober eighteenth century history. Four months later the Peace of Adrianople (June 24, 1713), mediated by the maritime powers, adjusted all the outstanding differences between Russia and the Porte. Charles lingered on in Turkey fifteen months longer in the hope of obtaining a cavalry escort sufficiently strong to enable him to restore his credit in Poland. Disappointed of this last hope, and moved by the despairing appeals of his sister Ulrica and the Senate to return to Sweden while there was still a Sweden to return to, he quitted Demotika on September 20, 1714, and after traversing Austria-Hungary, and making a long detour by Nürnberg and Cassel, to avoid the domains of the Elector of Saxony, he arrived unexpectedly at midnight, on November 11, at Stralsund, which, excepting the city of Wismar, was now all that remained to him on German soil.

It was to an entirely new political world that Charles XII returned. The war of the Spanish Succession was over; France, Sweden's traditional ally, was a factor that no longer counted in the European concert; the well-disposed Queen Anne was dead; the friendly Tory administration had disappeared; and the Hanoverian prince who sat on the English throne, so recently the deferential mercenary of the Swedish crown, was now the head of a new league to dismember Sweden, or rather (for Sweden was already dismembered) to compel her consent to the amputation. For the ruin of his empire Charles himself was largely but not entirely responsible. He had obstinately rejected the numerous advantageous offers of mediation or alliance repeatedly made to him by the maritime powers and by the king of Prussia in 1712, rather than consent to the smallest cession of Swedish or even Polish territory; in 1713 he had sacrificed the gallant Stenbock by imposing upon him and his 12,000 men the impossible task of reconquering Poland, and at the same time protecting Sweden's German possessions against the combined Russians, Danes, and Saxons; and in 1714 he had scouted the friendly overtures both of Louis XIV and the Emperor, so that, when peace was finally concluded between France and the Empire at the congress of Baden, Swedish affairs were, by common consent, left out of consideration. After Stenbock's surrender at Tönning on May 16, 1713, the Swedish empire, deprived of its last prop, had collapsed. By the end of 1714 the Tsar had completed the conquest of Finland; and in the spring of 1715 the new king of Prussia, Frederick William I, had also begun hostilities against Sweden, while England-Hanover had assumed a threatening attitude.

Pure rapacity was the sole cause of this shameful conduct on the part of the two Protestant powers who pretended to be Charles's allies, and from whom he had a perfect right to expect, if not active assistance, at least neutrality. Prussia had all along been playing a waiting game, and as soon as the

Swedish empire began to crumble away she made haste to enlarge her own domains out of its ruins. Still more disreputable, if possible, was the conduct of England-Hanover, for, though nominally at peace with Sweden, and indeed very unwilling to provoke a quarrel with her, the Whig ministry was obliged to support the foreign monarch of their choice; and a British fleet was sent to the Baltic to co-operate, to a limited extent, with the Danes and Russians against Charles, under the pretext of protecting British trade from the Swedish privateers. The treaties of Copenhagen, May 2, 1715, between Hanover and Denmark, and of May 17, between Denmark and Prussia, had already arranged all the details of the projected partition. Wolgast and Stettin were to fall to the share of Prussia; Rügen and Pomerania north of the Peene, to Denmark; and the duchies of Bremen and Verden to Hanover, which was to pay Denmark, their conqueror and present holder, 600,000 rix-dollars for this transfer. Charles naturally protested against this iniquitous traffic in stolen property, of which he was the real owner; whereupon Hanover formally declared war against him (Oct. 1715). Thus at the end of 1715 Sweden, now fast approaching the last stage of exhaustion, was at open war with England-Hanover, Russia, Prussia, Saxony, and Denmark. For twelve months Charles XII defended Stralsund with desperate valour; but the hostile forces were overwhelming, and on December 23, 1715, the fortress, now little more than a rubbish-heap, surrendered, Charles having effected his escape to Sweden two days before.

At this, the very darkest hour of his fortunes, the sudden discord of his numerous enemies seemed to offer Charles XII one more chance of emerging from his difficulties. It had become evident to all the members of the anti-Swedish league that till Charles XII had been attacked and conquered in the heart of his own realm the war might drag on indefinitely. But, when it came to the execution of this plan of invasion, insuperable obstacles presented themselves. To

begin with, Denmark and Saxony, and Hanover and Denmark, jealous of each other, were also incurably suspicious of the Tsar ; yet, without Peter's active co-operation, Charles was practically unassailable. And now, at the beginning of 1716, Peter seemed to justify their suspicions by his high-handed interference in purely German affairs. It was bad enough when, at the end of January, he punished Dantzic, a free city, for trading with Sweden, even going the length of seizing all the Swedish vessels in the harbour ; but when, on April 19, by the Treaty of Dantzic, he solemnly guaranteed Wismar and Warnemünde to the disreputable Duke Leopold of Mecklenburg, who married his niece, the Tsarevna Catherine Ivanovna, the same day, the prospect of seeing Mecklenburg a Russian outpost infuriated George I and Frederick IV.

Nevertheless, at a meeting between Peter and the Danish king at Altona on June 3, the invasion of Scania, where Charles XII had established himself in an entrenched camp defended by 20,000 men, was definitely arranged. On July 17 Peter arrived with his galley squadron at Copenhagen ; and 30,000 Russian and 23,000 Danish troops began to assemble in Sjælland, in order to make the descent under cover of the English, Danish, and Russian fleets. But July passed by, and still the Danes held back. Even when the British admiral, Norris, proposed a reconnaissance in the direction of Carlscrona, they raised objections. In mid-August Peter cruised off the Scanian coast to examine the lie of the land, and discovered that the Swedes had very strongly entrenched themselves. A bullet from one of their batteries actually pierced the yacht on which he flew his flag. Peter was naturally cautious, and his caution had been intensified by the terrible punishment with which his one act of temerity had so promptly been visited five years before, on the banks of the Pruth. Charles XII, he argued, always formidable, would be doubly dangerous at bay in the midst of his own people. Moreover Peter was growing more and more suspicious of his allies ; and their prolonged

delay in attacking the common foe seemed to point to secret negotiations or at least some understanding with Sweden. He submitted his doubts to two councils of Russian ministers and generals on September 12 and 16; and they unanimously advised him to postpone the descent to the following year. This resolution was subsequently communicated to the Danish and Hanoverian governments. Such was the real cause of the sudden and mysterious abandonment of the Scanian expedition, which had such important political results. Its immediate consequence was to create so deadly an enmity between the Tsar and George I, who regarded Peter's action as a deliberate act of treachery calculated to promote Russian designs in North Germany, that even the discovery of a supposed Jacobite plot at the beginning of 1717 (in which Charles XII was at first erroneously supposed to be implicated), leading to the arrest of the Swedish minister Gyllenborg at London, failed to bring about any *rapprochement* between the two sovereigns. On the contrary, henceforth both England-Hanover and Russia seriously endeavoured to come to terms with Sweden.

Thus Charles XII was at last in a position to play off his two most formidable enemies against each other; and for the second time in his career he had recourse to diplomacy. His chief instrument was the notorious Holsteiner, Baron Georg Heinrich von Götz, who had been one of the first to visit him on his arrival at Stralsund, and emerged from his presence chief minister, or "grand vizier" as the Swedes preferred to call the bold and crafty satrap, whose absolute devotion to the Swedish king took no account of the intense wretchedness of the Swedish nation. Götz, himself a man of uncommon audacity, seems to have been fascinated by the heroic element in Charles's nature, and was determined, if possible, to save him from his difficulties. He owed his extraordinary influence to the fact that he was the only one of Charles's advisers who believed, or pretended to believe, that Sweden was still far from exhaustion, or, at any-rate, had a sufficient reserve of

power to give support to a high-spirited, energetic diplomacy. This was Charles's own opinion. His fatal optimism utterly disregarded actual facts. His unshakeable belief in the justice, and consequently in the ultimate triumph, of his cause (for, after all, the war was defensive and he wanted only his own), formed an essential part of his religion. But misfortune had so far depressed him to the level of common-sense, that he was now willing to negotiate—but on his own terms. He was willing to relinquish a portion of the duchies of Bremen and Verden in exchange for a commensurate part of Norway, due regard being had to the differences of soil and climate. Thus Charles's invasions of Norway, in 1716 and 1718, were mainly due to political speculation. It was obvious that, with large districts of Norway actually in his hands, he could make better terms with the provisional holders of his ultramarine domains. But the exchange of a small portion of Bremen-Verden for something much larger elsewhere was the utmost concession he would make. This was an altogether inadequate basis for negotiation. Anyone but Görtz would have thrown the whole business up in despair. Yet he cheerfully plunged into the adventure, and wasted on what was obviously a hopeless quest an amount of *finesse* and *savoir-faire* which would have made the fortune of half-a-dozen ordinary diplomatists.

Görtz first felt the pulse of the English ministry, which rejected the Swedish terms as excessive; whereupon he turned to Russia. Formal negotiations were opened at Lofö, one of the Åland islands (May 23, 1718); Görtz being the principal Swedish and Vice-Chancellor Osterman the principal Russian commissioner. Peter, in view of the increasing instability of the league of partition, sincerely desired peace with Sweden. He was firmly resolved, indeed, to keep the bulk of his conquests; Finland he would retrocede, but Ingria, Livonia, Estonia, and Carelia, with Viborg, must be surrendered. If Charles consented, the Tsar undertook to compensate him

in whatever other direction he might choose. The Russian plenipotentiaries were instructed to treat the Swedish negotiators with the utmost courtesy, and to assure them that it was not merely a peace but an alliance with the king of Sweden that the Tsar desired. Two things were soon evident to the keen-witted Osterman—that Görtz was hiding the Russian conditions from Charles, and that the majority of the Swedes were altogether opposed to the Russian negotiations, rightly judging that nothing obtained elsewhere could compensate for the loss of the Baltic provinces. He opined that there was little chance of a peace unless, at least, Reval was retroceded.

Twice the negotiations were interrupted, in order that Görtz and Osterman might consult their principals. In October, Osterman, in a private report to the Tsar, accurately summed up the whole situation. The negotiations, he said, were entirely Görtz's work. Charles seemed to care little for his own interests so long as he could fight or gallop about: in the circumstances it might fairly be argued that he was not quite sane. Sweden's power of resistance was nearly at breaking point. Every artisan and one out of every two peasants had already been taken for soldiers. She could not fight much longer. Osterman strongly advised that additional pressure should be brought to bear by a devastating raid in Swedish territory. There was, however, a chance that Charles might break his neck, or be shot in one of his adventures. Such an ending, continued the vice-chancellor, "if it happened after peace had been signed, would release us from all our obligations; and if it happened before, would be equally beneficial to us by dividing Sweden between the Holstein and Hessian factions, both of whom are eager to save Sweden's German, and therefore willing to cede her Baltic, possessions, and bid against each other for our favour."

Osterman's anticipations were strikingly realised. A few weeks later, at the end of October, 1718, Charles invaded

southern Norway; the Danish army retired before him, and, on November 18, he began the siege of the fortress of Fredericksten. The commandant made a stout defence; but, on December 8, the Swedes captured the little fort of Gyldenlöve, and from thence steadily carried forward their approaches against the main fortress in the face of a violent cannonade. On December 11, when they had come within 280 paces of Fredericksten, Charles XII, who was leaning against the parapet of the foremost trench, looked over it, and the same instant was struck through the temple by a shot from the fortress, and died on the spot¹.

The news reached the Åland islands on Christmas Day, 1718; and the congress was suspended to await events. The irresolution of Charles's nephew, the young duke of Holstein, the legitimate heir to the Swedish throne, sealed the fate of a party already detested in Sweden because of its identification with Görtz, who was arrested the very day after Charles's death, and executed for high treason in February, 1719. In March, Charles's one surviving sister, the Princess Ulrica Leonora, was elected queen by the Riksdag, on condition that she surrendered "sovereignty." Immediately afterwards the negotiations at Lofö were resumed. But the Swedish plenipotentiaries now declared that they would rather resume the war than surrender the Baltic provinces; and when, in July, a Russian fleet proceeded to the Swedish coast and landed a raiding force, which destroyed property to the value of thirteen millions of rubles, the Swedish government, far from being intimidated, broke off all negotiations with Russia. On September 17 the Åland congress was dissolved; and pacific overtures were made instead to England-Hanover, Prussia, and Denmark. By the Treaties of Stockholm, February 20, 1719, and February 1, 1720, Hanover obtained the bishoprics of Bremen and Verden for herself, and Stettin and district for her confederate, Prussia.

¹ The more or less preposterous legends that he was murdered by a traitor have long since been exploded.

By the Treaty of Fredericksborg, July 3, 1720, peace was also signed between Denmark and Sweden; Denmark retroceding Rügen, Further Pomerania as far as the Peene, and Wismar to Sweden, in exchange for an indemnity of 600,000 rix-dollars; while Sweden relinquished her exemption from the Sound tolls, and her protectorate over Holstein-Gottorp; Great Britain and France guaranteeing to Denmark her Sleswick possessions by the treaties of July 26 and August 18, 1720.

The prospect of coercing Russia by means of the British fleet had alone induced Sweden to consent to such sacrifices; but, when the last demands of England and her allies had been complied with, she was left to come to terms as best she could with the Tsar. The efforts which England made at Vienna, Berlin, and Warsaw, in the course of 1720-21, to obtain by diplomatic methods some mitigation of Russia's terms in favour of Sweden, proved fruitless, chiefly owing to the stubborn neutrality of Prussia; and, though a British fleet was despatched to the Baltic, to protect Sweden's coasts, it looked on helplessly when the Russian bands again descended upon the unhappy country in the course of 1720, and destroyed two towns, forty-one villages, and 1026 farms. "We may not have done much harm to the enemy," wrote Peter to Yaguzhinsky on this occasion, "but, thank God, we have done it under the very noses of their defenders, who were unable to prevent it." In her isolation and abandonment, Sweden had now no choice but to reopen negotiations with Russia at Nystad in May, 1721. She still pleaded hard for Livonia and Viborg; but a third Russian raid, in which three towns and 506 villages were destroyed, accelerated the negotiations; and, on August 30, 1721, by the Peace of Nystad, Sweden ceded all her Baltic provinces (and, with them, the hegemony of the North) to Russia, receiving, in return, an indemnity of two million thalers, free-trade in the Baltic, and a solemn undertaking of non-interference in her domestic affairs.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE HATS AND CAPS, AND GUSTAVUS III OF SWEDEN, 1721-1792.

IT was not the least of Sweden's misfortunes, after the great Northern War, that the new constitution, which was to compensate for all her past sacrifices, should contain within it the elements of many of her future calamities. Early in 1720 Ulrica Leonora was permitted to abdicate in favour of her husband, the prince of Hesse, who was elected king under the title of Frederick I; and Sweden was at the same time converted into the most limited of monarchies. All power was vested in the people as represented by the Riksdag or Diet, consisting as before of four distinct Estates, nobles, priests, burgesses, and peasants, sitting and deliberating apart. The conflicting interests and mutual jealousies of these four independent Parliaments made the work of legislation exceptionally difficult. No measure could become law till it had obtained the assent of three at least of the four Estates; but this provision, which seems to have been designed to protect the lower orders against the nobility, produced ills far greater than those it professed to cure. Thus measures might be passed by a bare majority in three Estates, when a real and substantial majority of all four Estates in congress might be actually against it. Or, again, a dominant faction in any three of the Estates might enact laws highly detrimental to the interests of the remaining Estate—a danger the more to be apprehended,

as in no other country in Europe were class distinctions so sharply defined as in Sweden.

The Swedish nobility possessed the usual aristocratic privileges, of which freedom from taxation and the exclusive right to the higher offices of state were the chief. The head of each noble family had the right to sit in the Upper House; but most of these hereditary legislators, too needy to reside in the capital during the season of the Riksdag, derived a considerable income from the sale of their *fullmakts*, or proxies, to the highest bidder.

The order of clergy deservedly enjoyed a political influence out of all proportion to its limited numbers, for it was by far the best educated and least servile body in the kingdom. Yet the hard-worked Swedish hierarchy was so ill paid that the poorest gentlemen rarely thought of the Church as a profession. The bishops, too, were not lords spiritual, as in England, but simply the first among equals in their own Estate. The burgesses, again, were burgesses in the most literal acceptation of the word, merchants and traders, with the exclusive right of representing in the Diet the boroughs where they traded. But this right, whilst manifestly adding to the political importance of the order of burgesses, naturally accentuated the distinction between gentlemen and commoners. The peasantry also could only be represented in the Diet by peasants; and the practice of excluding the members of this order from most of the special committees, in which the chief business of the session was done, minimised their power of influencing the course of public affairs.

Each Estate was ruled by its *talman*, or speaker, who was elected at the beginning of each Diet, but the archbishop was *ex officio* the talman of the clergy. The *Landmarskalk*, or Speaker of the House of Nobles, presided when the Estates met in congress, and also, by virtue of his office, in the Secret Committee. This famous body, which consisted of 50 nobles, 25 priests, 25 burgesses, and, very exceptionally,

25 peasants, practically possessed, during the session of the Diet, not only the supreme executive, but also the supreme judicial and legislative functions. It prepared all bills for the Riksdag, created and deposed all ministries, controlled the foreign policy of the nation, and claimed, and often exercised, the right of superseding the ordinary courts of justice. During the parliamentary recess, however, the executive remained in the hands of the Råd or Senate.

It will be obvious that there was no room in this republican constitution for a constitutional monarch in the modern sense of the word. The crowned puppet who possessed a casting-vote in the Råd, of which he was the nominal president, and who was allowed to create peers at his coronation, was rather a state decoration than a sovereign.

At first this cumbrous and complicated machinery of government worked tolerably well under the firm but cautious control of the chancellor, Count Arvid Bernhard Horn. Under his prudent and pacific administration the work of restoration proceeded rapidly. In his anxiety to avoid embroiling his country abroad, Horn reversed the traditional foreign policy of Sweden by keeping France at a distance, and drawing near to Great Britain, for whose liberal institutions he professed the highest admiration. Thus a twenty years' war was succeeded by a twenty years' peace, during which the nation recovered so rapidly from its wounds that it began to forget them. A new race of politicians was springing up. Since 1719, when the influence of the few great territorial families had been merged in a multitude of needy gentlemen, the first Estate had become the nursery, and afterwards the stronghold, of an opposition at once noble and democratic, which found its natural leaders in Count Carl Gyllenborg, Daniel Niklas von Höpken, and Count Carl Gustaf Tessin. These men and their followers were never weary of ridiculing the timid caution of the aged statesman who sacrificed everything to perpetuate an inglorious peace,

and derisively nicknamed his adherents Night-Caps (a term subsequently softened into Caps), themselves adopting the sobriquet Hats. These epithets instantly caught the public fancy. The nickname Night-cap seemed exactly to suit the drowsy policy of a peace-loving dotard; while the three-cornered hat, worn by officers and gentlemen, as happily hit off the manly self-assertion of the Opposition; and, when the Estates met in 1738, these party badges were in general use. That Riksdag was to mark a turning-point in Swedish history. The Hats carried everything before them; and the aged Horn was finally compelled to retire from a scene where for three-and-thirty years he had played a leading part. The Senate was then purged of Caps; Gyllenborg gained at last the long-coveted post of chancellor; Tessin was sent to Paris as ambassador; the long and disastrous dominion of the Hats had begun.

The foreign policy of the Hats was a return to the traditional alliance between France and Sweden. When Sweden descended to her natural position as a second-rate power, the French alliance became a luxury too costly for her straitened means. Horn clearly perceived this; and his cautious neutrality was therefore the wisest statesmanship. But the politicians who had ousted Horn thought differently. To them prosperity without glory was a worthless possession. They aimed at nothing less than restoring Sweden to her former proud position as a great power. France naturally hailed with satisfaction the rise of a faction which was content to be her armour-bearer in the North; and the rich golden streams which flowed continuously from Versailles to Stockholm during the next two generations was the political life-blood of the Hat party.

The first blunder of the Hats was the hasty and ill-advised war with Russia. The European complications, consequent upon the almost simultaneous deaths of the Emperor Charles VI and Anne, empress of Russia, seemed to favour their adven-

turous schemes; and, despite the frantic protests of the Caps, a project for the invasion of Russian Finland was rushed through the premature Riksdag of 1740. On July 20, 1741, war was formally declared against Russia on the most frivolous pretexts. A month later the Diet was dissolved; and the Hat Landmarskalk, Carl Emil Levenhaupt, set off for Finland to take command of the army. The first blow was not struck till six months after the declaration of war, and it was struck by the enemy, who utterly routed General Vrangel at Willamstrand, and captured and destroyed that frontier fortress. Nothing else was done on either side for six months more; and then Levenhaupt made a "tacit truce" with the Russians through the mediation of the French ambassador at St Petersburg. By the time that this "tacit truce" had come to an end, the Swedish forces were so demoralised that the mere rumour of a hostile attack made them retire panic-stricken before purely imaginary invaders to Helsingfors; and before the end of the same year all Finland was in the hands of the Russians. The fleet, from which great things had been expected, was disabled from the first by a terrible epidemic, and throughout the war was little more than a floating hospital.

To face another Riksdag with such a war as this upon their consciences was a trial from which the Hats naturally shrank; but, to do them justice, they showed themselves better parliamentary than military strategists. A motion for an enquiry into the conduct of the war was skilfully evaded by obtaining precedence for the succession question (Queen Ulrica Leonora had lately died childless, and King Frederick was old); and negotiations were then opened with the new Russian empress, Elizabeth, who agreed to restore the greater part of Finland if her cousin, Adolphus Frederick of Holstein, were elected successor to the Swedish crown. The Hats eagerly caught at the opportunity of recovering the Grand Duchy, and their own prestige along with it. By the Peace

of Åbo (May 7, 1743) the terms of the empress were accepted; and only that small part of Finland which lay beyond the Kymmenen was retained by Russia.

The new crown-prince of Sweden was remotely connected with the ancient dynasty, his grandfather's grandmother having been the sister of the great Gustavus. Personally he was altogether insignificant, being chiefly remarkable as the willing slave of a beautiful and talented but imperious consort, whom he also owed to his adopted country. That consort was Louisa Ulrica, Frederick the Great's sister, whom Tessin, now chancellor, conducted from Berlin to Stockholm, where she speedily gathered around her a brilliant circle. Her friendship naturally became the prize for which both the factions contended. The Russian faction, as the Caps henceforth became, looked for certain support from Russia's *protégés*; but the French tastes and sympathies of the Voltairean princess drew her at first towards the French faction, whose brilliant leader, Count Tessin, became her closest friend, and the governor of her first-born son, Gustavus. But the friendship was shattered irretrievably when, in the course of 1750, Tessin, alarmed at the growing cordiality between Russia and Denmark, skilfully interposed, and arranged a betrothal between his little pupil and the Danish princess-royal, despite the parents of the infant bridegroom, who protested in vain against a family alliance with the hereditary foe of the house of Holstein.

In March, 1751, old King Frederick died. His slender prerogatives had gradually dwindled down to vanishing point. Latterly he had become too decrepit even to affix his sign-manual to official documents; and, at his own request, a "name-stamp," with the royal signature engraved therein, had been manufactured to assist him in his purely mechanical duties. Adolphus Frederick would have given even less trouble than his predecessor, but for the ambitious promptings of his masterful consort; yet it must be admitted that the Estates seemed bent upon going out of their way to mortify

the mildest of princes. They disputed his right to appoint his own household or to create peers; they declared that all state appointments were to go by seniority; they threatened to use the "name-stamp" if his Majesty refused to append his sign-manual to official documents; and they practically denied the king and queen the right of educating their own children by arbitrarily dismissing all the crown-prince's tutors and governors, and appointing others whose political sentiments were acceptable to the majority of the Riksdag. An attempted revolution, planned by the queen and a few devoted young noblemen in 1756, was easily and remorselessly crushed; and, though the unhappy king did not, as he anticipated, share the fate of Charles Stewart, he was humiliated as never monarch was humiliated before. Royalty must indeed have been in evil case when "most humble and most dutiful subjects" could venture to remind their "most mighty and most gracious sovereign" that kings in general are the natural enemies of their subjects; that in "free states" they merely exist on sufferance; that, because they are occasionally invested with pomp and dignity, "more for the honour of the realm, than for the sake of the person who may occupy the chief place in the pageant," they must not therefore imagine that "they are more than men, while other men are less than worms"; that as "the glare and glitter" of a court tends to puff them up with the idea that they are made of finer stuff than their fellow-creatures, they would do well occasionally to visit the peasant's lowly hut, and there learn that it is because of the wasteful extravagance of a court that the peasant's loaf is so light and his burden so heavy—and so on through a score of paragraphs. This "instruction" was solemnly presented to his Majesty by the marshal of the Diet and the *talmen* of the three lower Estates; and he was requested to present it, with his own hand, to the prince's new governor.

The same year which beheld this great domestic triumph

of the Hats, saw also the utter collapse of their foreign "system." At the instigation of France they had plunged recklessly into the Seven Years' War; and the result was ruinous. The French subsidies, which might have sufficed for a six weeks' demonstration (it was generally assumed that the king of Prussia would give little trouble to a European coalition), proved quite inadequate; and, after five unsuccessful campaigns, the unhappy Hats were glad to make peace, and ignominiously withdraw from a little war which had cost the country 40,000 men and £2,500,000. When the Riksdag met in 1760, the indignation against the Hat leaders was so violent that an impeachment seemed inevitable; but once more the superiority of their parliamentary tactics prevailed, and when, after a session of twenty months, the Riksdag was brought to a close by the mutual consent of both the exhausted factions, the Hat government was bolstered up for another four years. But the day of reckoning could not be postponed for ever; and when the Estates met again in 1765 it brought the Caps into power at last. Their leader, Ture Rudbeck, was elected marshal of the Diet over Axel af Fersen, the Hat candidate, by a large majority; and, out of the hundred seats in the Secret Committee, the Hats succeeded in getting only ten.

The Caps struck at once at the weak point of their opponents by ordering a budget report to be made; and it was speedily found that the whole financial system of the Hats had been based upon reckless improvidence and wilful misrepresentation, and that the only fruit of their long rule was an enormous addition to the national debt, and a depreciation of the note circulation to one-third of its face value. This revelation led to an all-round retrenchment, carried into effect with a drastic thoroughness which has earned for this Parliament the name of the "Reduktion Riksdag." The Caps succeeded in transferring £250,000 from the pockets of the rich to the empty exchequer, reducing the debt by £575,179, and establishing some sort of equilibrium between revenue and expenditure.

They also introduced a few useful reforms, the most remarkable of which was the liberty of the press. But their most important political act was to throw in their lot definitively with Russia, so as to counterpoise the influence of France. Sweden was not then, as now, quite outside the European Concert. Although no longer a great power, she had still many of the responsibilities of a great power; and, if the Swedish alliance had considerably depreciated in value, it was still a marketable article. Sweden's peculiar geographical position made her practically invulnerable for six months out of the twelve, while her Pomeranian possessions afforded her an easy ingress into the very heart of the moribund Empire, and her Finnish frontier was not many leagues from the Russian capital.

A watchful neutrality, not venturing much beyond defensive alliances and commercial treaties with the maritime powers, was therefore Sweden's safest policy; and this the older Caps had always recognised and followed out. But when the Hats became the armour-bearers of France in the North, a protector strong enough to countervail French influence became the cardinal exigency of their opponents, the younger Caps; so, without more ado, they flung themselves into the arms of Russia, overlooking the fact that even a pacific union with Russia was more to be feared than a martial alliance with France. For France was too distant to be dangerous. She sought an ally in Sweden, and it was her endeavour to make that ally as strong as possible. But it was as a future prey, not as a possible ally, that Russia regarded her ancient rival in the North. The iron sceptre of Peter the Great was in the vigorous grasp of Catharine II; and it was the life-long ambition of that unscrupulous princess to degrade all her neighbours to the rank of tributary principalities. In the treaty that partitioned Poland there was a secret clause which engaged the contracting powers to uphold the Swedish free constitution as the swiftest and surest means of subverting Swedish independence; and an alliance with the

credulous Caps, "the Patriots" as they were called at St Petersburg, guaranteeing their constitution, was the necessary corollary to this secret understanding. Thus, while the French alliance of the warlike Hats had destroyed the prestige of Sweden, the Russian alliance of the peaceful Caps threatened to destroy her very existence.

Fortunately the domination of the Caps was not long. The general distress occasioned by their drastic reforms had found expression in swarms of pamphlets which bit and stung the Cap government, under the protection of the new press laws. The Senate retaliated by an Order in Council (which the king refused to sign) declaring that all complaints against the measures of the last Riksdag should be punished with fine and imprisonment. On December 9, 1768, the king, followed by the crown-prince, entered the "Sacred College," as Gustavus, the prime mover in the whole affair, ironically called the Senate; and the prince read a short message, on behalf of his father, urging the Råd to convoke an extraordinary Riksdag, as the speediest method of relieving the national distress, solemnly declaring that, in case of a refusal, he would abdicate and hold the Senate responsible for the evils of an interregnum. The Senate obstinately refusing to comply with the royal wishes, Adolphus Frederick accordingly abdicated; and, from December 15 to December 21, Sweden was without a regular government. On December 17 a deputation from most of the public offices, headed by their presidents, marched in solemn procession to the palace, where they demanded an audience of the Senate, and declared that they could no longer exercise their functions without violating the constitution. They then waited upon the ex-king, and humbly thanked him for his fatherly sympathy with his suffering people. Their example was followed on the 19th by the magistracy of Stockholm. Still the Senate, strong in the support of the Russian and Danish ministers, showed no sign of wavering. But when the Treasury refused to part with

a single shilling more, when the commander of the guard appeared in the council-chamber, and declared he could no longer answer for his troops, the stubborn resistance of the Caps was broken at last, and, at the eleventh hour, they reluctantly gave way. On December 19 it was resolved to convoke the Estates for April 19, 1769. Two days later Adolphus Frederick reappeared in the council-chamber and resumed the crown.

Both parties now prepared for the elections which were to decide whether the nation preferred to be governed by a king or a name-stamp. On the eve of the contest there was a general assembly of the Hats at the French embassy, where the Comte de Modène furnished them with 6,000,000 livres, but not till they had signed in his presence an undertaking to reform the constitution in a monarchical sense. Still more energetic on the other side, the Russian ambassador, Osterman, became the treasurer as well as the councillor of the Caps, and scattered the largesse of the Russian empress with a lavish hand; and so lost to all sense of patriotism were the Caps, that they openly threatened all who dared to vote against them with the Moscovite vengeance, and fixed Norrköping, instead of Stockholm, as the place of meeting for the Riksdag, as being more accessible to the Russian fleet, which was being fitted out at Cronstadt to assist them in case of need. But it soon became evident that the Caps were playing a losing game; and, when the Riksdag met at Norrköping on April 19, they found themselves in a minority in all four Estates.

The first act of the Riksdag was to move a humble address of thanks to the king, "because he had not shut his ears to the bitter cry of the nation," and to the crown-prince for his patriotic zeal. The Caps had short shrift; and the joint note which the Russian, Prussian and Danish ministers presented to the Estates, protesting, in menacing terms, against any "reprisals" on the part of the triumphant faction, only hastened the fall of the government. The Cap Senate

resigned *en masse* to escape impeachment, and an exclusively Hat ministry took its place. On June 1 the "Reaction Riksdag," as it is generally called, removed to the capital; and it was now that the French ambassador and the crown-prince called upon the new senators to redeem their promise as to a reform of the constitution, which they had made before the elections. But when, at the fag-end of the session, they half-heartedly brought the matter forward, the Riksdag suddenly seemed stricken with paralysis. Impediments multiplied at every step; the cry was raised, "The constitution is in danger"; and on January 30, 1770, the Reaction Riksdag, after a barren ten months' session, rose amidst chaotic confusion without accomplishing anything.

Gustavus sought consolation in a long-projected visit to Paris, which he reached on February 4, 1771. The young Hyperborean took both the town and the court by storm, and shone in the brilliant firmament of French society as a star of the first magnitude. But this "delightful dream," as Gustavus himself has called it, had a rude awakening. On March 1, 1771, a special courier from Stockholm reached Paris with the news of the death of King Adolphus Frederick, which was duly communicated to Louis XV. Count Creutz, the Swedish ambassador at Paris, subsequently received from the French minister of foreign affairs a memorandum whereby France undertook to pay the outstanding subsidies to Sweden unconditionally, at the rate of one-and-a-half million of livres annually, commencing from January, 1772; and Vergennes, one of the great names of French diplomacy, was to be sent to circumvent the designs of Russia at Stockholm, as he had previously circumvented them at Stambul. On March 25 Gustavus quitted Paris. He had previously been advised by the Swedish Senate to pay a conciliatory visit to his uncle, Frederick the Great; and he was received with great distinction, if with little cordiality, at Potsdam. Frederick seems already to have foreseen a rival in his nephew, and bluntly informed

him that, in concert with Russia and Denmark, he had guaranteed the integrity of the existing Swedish constitution, and was prepared to defend it by force of arms. "If there were Swedes in Sweden," said the veteran statesman, "they would soon agree to bury their differences; but foreign corruption has so perverted the national spirit that harmony is impossible"; and he advised the young monarch to play the part of mediator and abstain from violence.

Meanwhile, in Sweden itself, the arrival of the new king was impatiently awaited. The elections on the demise of the crown had resulted in a partial victory for the Caps, especially among the lower orders; but in the Estate of the Peasants the majority was merely nominal, while the mass of the nobility was dead against them. Nothing could be done, however, till the arrival of the king; and everyone felt that with Gustavus an entirely incalculable factor had entered into Swedish politics. Born on January 24, 1746, he was now in his twenty-fifth year; and his universally recognised abilities inspired equal hope and fear. On June 6, 1771, the amiable young monarch entered his capital, and was received with a burst of enthusiasm which encouraged him honestly to endeavour to reconcile the jarring factions by inducing the leaders to form a composition committee to adjust their differences. Unfortunately the Caps and their foreign supporters regarded this intervention as a ruse on the king's part to save the Hat Senate from well-merited punishment; and when, in the meantime, the Cap nominees, after a severe struggle, had been elected *talmén* of the three lower Estates, their tone became so dictatorial that the king secretly borrowed £200,000 from Holland, on the security of the promised French subsidies, to carry through the election of the Hat nominee, Baron Lejonhufvud, as marshal of the Diet, by way of counterpoise. Thereupon the Caps became more conciliatory; and a compromise was arrived at, according to which five Hats were voluntarily to retire from the Senate in favour

of five Caps, the Caps undertaking in return not to reopen the vexed question of the legality of the last Riksdag.

Gustavus could now meet the Estates with a light heart; and on June 21, 1771, he formally opened his first Parliament in a speech which awakened strange and deep emotions in all who heard it. It was the first time for nearly a century that a Swedish king had addressed a Swedish Riksdag from the throne in its native language. Old men, who still remembered Charles XII with fond regret, exclaimed that they might die in peace now that they had heard Gustavus III.

Unfortunately, this new-born enthusiasm evaporated in less than a week. A few days later, the Cap majority in the lower Order, disregarding article XII of the composition which stipulated that in future each Estate should select at least a third of its delegates to the Secret Committee from the minority, sent up to the Committee none but Caps; whereupon the nobility retaliated by electing forty-six Hats, and only four Caps. The commoner majority in the Riksdag speedily showed its hand. A special commission was appointed to draft a new coronation oath, which contained three downright revolutionary clauses. The first aimed at making abdications in the future impossible, by binding the king to reign uninterruptedly. The second obliged him to abide, not by the decision of all the Estates together, as heretofore, but by that of the majority only, with the view of enabling the actually dominant lower Estates to rule without, and even in spite of, the nobility. The third clause required his Majesty, in all cases of preferment, to be guided not "principally," as heretofore, but "solely" by merit, thus striking at the very root of aristocratic privilege by placing noble and non-noble on precisely the same footing. It was clear that the ancient strife of Hats and Caps had become merged in a conflict of classes; and the situation was still further complicated by the ominous fact that the non-noble majority was also the Russian faction.

All through the summer, autumn, and winter of 1771 the Estates wrangled over the clauses of the coronation oath. A sincere attempt of the king to mediate between them foundered on the suspicion and obstinacy of the burgesses; and on February 24, 1772, the nobility yielded from sheer weariness. Elated by their triumph, the non-nobles Cap majority proceeded to attack the Senate, the last stronghold of the Hats, and on April 25 succeeded in ousting their opponents. It was now for the first time that Gustavus, reduced to the condition of a *roi fainéant*, began to consider the possibility of a revolution; of its necessity there could be no doubt. Under the sway of the now dominant faction, Sweden, already the vassal, could not fail speedily to become the prey of Russia. She was on the point of being absorbed in that northern system, the invention of the Russian chancellor, Panin, which that patient statesman had made it the ambition of his life to realise. Only a swift and sudden *coup d'état* could save the independence of a country isolated from the rest of Europe by a hostile league. At this juncture Gustavus's enemies unconsciously supplied him with the very instrument he was in search of, in the person of Colonel Magnus Sprengtporten, a Finnish nobleman of determined character, who had incurred the hatred of the Caps by his extreme royalist opinions, and, seeing nothing but ruin before him, privately approached the king with a project of a revolt against the tyranny of the Estates, which was to begin in Finland, where Sprengtporten's regiment was stationed. He undertook to seize the fortress of Sveaborg by a *coup de main*, which would entail the speedy submission of the whole Grand Duchy; and, Finland once secured, Sprengtporten proposed to embark for Sweden, meet the king and his friends near Stockholm, and surprise the capital by a night attack, when the Estates were to be forced, at the point of the bayonet, to accept a new constitution from the untrammeled king. Gustavus warmly approved of the project, but

advised the utmost secrecy until the project was well matured.

Matters had reached this stage when the plot was mysteriously disclosed; and the conspirators were reluctantly reinforced by a confederate who in audacity and ability far excelled them all. This was an ex-ranger from Scania, named Johan Christopher Toll, also a victim of Cap oppression, who had come up to the capital to seek a career, wormed the plot out of Sprengtporten's younger brother George, and boldly demanded a share in it. George advised Magnus that such a dangerous man as Toll should be put out of the way at once, or made a confederate; and the latter alternative was at once adopted by the elder Sprengtporten. Toll proposed that a second revolt should break out in the province of Scania, to confuse the government the more, and undertook personally to secure the southern fortress of Christianstad. After some debate, Toll's proposal was dovetailed into the original plot. It was now arranged that, a few days after the Finnish revolt had begun, Christianstad should openly declare against the government. Prince Charles, the eldest of the king's brothers, was thereupon hastily to mobilise the garrisons of all the southern fortresses, for the ostensible purpose of crushing the revolt at Christianstad; but, on arriving before the fortress, he was to make common cause with the rebels, and march upon the capital from the south, while Sprengtporten and his Finns attacked it simultaneously from the east. Neither Sprengtporten nor Toll knew exactly what to make of Gustavus. His character formed the one doubtful quantity in all their calculations. Was a refined fribbler, of anything but a martial temperament, the natural leader of a military revolt which might at any moment become a sanguinary civil war? They resolved to leave as little as possible to chance by surrounding the young king with resolute helpers, and keeping him in the background till the very last moment, "when," as Sprengtporten put it, "we must thrust a sword into his hand, and trust him to use it."

The first step was taken two days after the coronation (May 31, 1772), when Toll set out for Scania to reconnoitre and prepare the way. He reached the fortress on June 21, gained at once one of the officers of the garrison, Captain Abraham Hellichius, and, on August 6, after receiving a letter from Prince Charles, announcing his speedy arrival, succeeded, by sheer bluff, in winning the fortress, which forthwith shut its gates in the face of the Cap leader, Ture Rudbeck, whom the government, warned of the impending rebellion by the English minister, Goodrich, had sent in hot haste to the south as high commissioner.

Meanwhile, in Finland, Sprengtporten had been equally successful. On August 6 he reached Helsingfors; on the 14th he conveyed his soldiers by sea to Sveaborg; on the 16th he surprised the garrison, and persuaded the officers, most of whom were Hats, to join him; and, in a week, the whole of Finland lay at the feet of the intrepid colonel. By August 13, Sprengtporten was ready to re-embark for Stockholm, but contrary winds delayed him; and, in the meantime, events had occurred in the Swedish capital which rendered his presence there unnecessary.

The high commissioner Rudbeck, who arrived at Stockholm on August 16, was the first to break the news of the insurrection in the south. At a cabinet council, instantly summoned, the majority opined that the king should at once be arrested. But Senator Funck pointed out that, as they had no proof of his Majesty's complicity, such a step might be too hazardous. Later in the day a courier from Prince Charles arrived with an official account of the outbreak (and a secret letter for the king sewn in his saddle), whereupon, at a second cabinet council, Rudbeck's regiment was summoned to the capital, to reinforce the garrison. The contingency so much dreaded by Sprengtporten had actually arrived. Gustavus found himself isolated in the midst of enemies. Sprengtporten lay weatherbound in Finland; Toll was five hundred miles away; the Hat leaders were in hiding

at their country houses. The king's resolution was at once taken. He would strike the decisive blow himself without waiting for the arrival of Sprengtposten. Gustavus acted with military promptitude. On the evening of the 18th all the officers in the capital whom he thought he could trust received his secret instructions to assemble in the great square facing the arsenal on the following morning. Gustavus had already won over the burgher cavalry organised by the Secret Committee to patrol the streets every night. The king had volunteered to accompany them on their rounds; and a couple of nights had sufficed the fascinating young monarch to convert them into ardent royalists.

At ten o'clock, on August 19, Gustavus mounted his horse, and rode straight to the arsenal. On the way his adherents joined him in little groups, as if by accident, so that by the time he reached his destination he had about two hundred officers in his suite. It had been arranged beforehand that, if the king returned to the palace on foot, all the officers in his train should follow and assist him to carry out the revolution; but, if he remounted, it would be a sign that the whole affair had been abandoned. When then the parade was over, the king turned to his suite, and remarked loud enough for everyone to hear, "As all these gentlemen go on foot, I may as well do the same"; whereupon he walked back to the palace with his escort. On reaching the palace-yard the king entered the guard-room. The doors were then closed, and Gustavus unfolded his plans. With all the energy which the emergency demanded he painted in vivid colours the unhappy situation of the country. In this extremity, he said, he turned to his faithful bodyguards. He would have them know that he abhorred despotism as much as any man, and now, as heretofore, regarded it as the greatest honour to be the first citizen of a free and uncorrupted people. "If," cried he in conclusion, "you will follow me as your forefathers followed Gustavus Vasa and Gustavus Adolphus, I will venture

“my life-blood for the safety and honour of my country.” The king then dictated the new oath of allegiance to one of his chamberlains; and everybody signed it without hesitation. It absolved them from their allegiance to the Estates, and bound them solely to obey their lawful king, Gustavus III. The soldiers in the parade-ground of the palace followed the example of their officers.

While all this was going on in the guard-room, the Senate, in another part of the palace, had already been arrested by Captain Aminoff and thirty of the guard. The Secret Committee, ~~which was holding its last session at the Riddarhus, dispersed panic-stricken on hearing of the arrest of the Senate;~~ Governor-General Rudbeck was arrested while at dinner, under a royal warrant; and the fleet, moored along the quays of the Skeppsholm, was secured by Admiral Tersmeden. The king had fixed his provisional headquarters in the artillery yard; and it was here that he first bound a white handkerchief round his left arm as a mark of recognition, and bade all his friends do the same. In less than an hour the whole city had donned the white handkerchief. After a visit to the Skeppsholm, to distribute money among the sailors, Gustavus made the tour of the city. Wherever he appeared he was surrounded by enthusiastic crowds who hailed him as their deliverer. It was not so much a political revolution as a national festival.

During the night all the watches remained at their posts. The English and Russian ministers are said to have made a fruitless attempt to stir up the fleet to a counter-revolution; and it was found necessary to place a guard round those ministers' banks. Fortunately perfect tranquillity prevailed.

On the evening of August 20 heralds perambulated the city proclaiming that the Estates were to meet in the Rikssaal at four o'clock on the following day; every deputy absenting himself would be regarded as the enemy of his country and his king. Extraordinary and elaborate precautions were taken.

All the principal thoroughfares were lined with battalions of the guards. The Rikssaal itself was surrounded by a park of artillery. One hundred grenadiers stood behind the guns with lighted matches. It was customary for the four Orders to assemble in their respective halls, and thence proceed in state to the Rikssaal, the land-marshal and the three *talmen* heading their respective Orders with their maces borne before them. This time-honoured procession was now forbidden; and the terrified mob of Riksdagsmen crept, by twos and threes, into their places between rows of glittering bayonets. A few minutes after the Estates had assembled, the king, in full regalia, appeared, and taking his seat on the throne, delivered that famous philippic, one of the masterpieces of Swedish oratory, in which he reproached the Estates for their unpatriotic venality and licence in the past.

It was nearly two hundred and fifty years since a Swedish Parliament had received such a reprimand from the throne. Gustavus Vasa, at the Riksdag of Vesterås in 1527, had indeed trounced the Estates roundly in language of brutal frankness; but those who listened to bluff King Gus were well aware that they could endure his reproaches without humiliation, because, at the bottom of his heart, he respected them as his valiant companions in arms. It was a castigation such as an angry father might administer to a beloved and wayward son: the pain is forgotten the moment the rod ceases to strike. Much more galling was the lecture which Gustavus III addressed to his Parliament. He was scrupulously temperate in tone, but his very forbearance was intolerable. His audience could not avoid the conviction that their king regarded them either as dupes or traitors. It was the sort of rebuke which an indignant but indulgent master might inflict upon a trusted servant who has abused his confidence, and whom he finally overwhelms with the humiliation of an undeserved forgiveness. The new constitution was then recited to the Estates, and accepted by them unanimously; the

king, at the same time, swearing to and subscribing a new coronation oath; whereupon Gustavus, rising and reverently removing his crown, ordered a Te Deum to be sung to thank Divine Providence “for knitting together once more the old bands between king and people.” The assembly then dispersed.

The new constitution converted a weak and disunited republic into a strong but limited monarchy, in which the balance of power inclined, on the whole, to the side of the monarch. The Riksdag could assemble only when summoned by him; he could dismiss it whenever he thought fit; and its deliberations were to be confined exclusively to the propositions which he might think fit to lay before it. But these very extensive powers were subjected to many important checks. Thus, without the previous consent of the Estates, no new law could be imposed, no old law abolished, no offensive war undertaken, no extraordinary war subsidy levied. The Estates alone could tax themselves; they had the absolute control of the Bank of Sweden, and the inalienable right of controlling the national expenditure. Thus the Parliament held the purse; and this seemed a sufficient guarantee both of its independence and its frequent convention. The Senate, not the Riksdag, was the chief loser by the change; and, inasmuch as henceforth the senators were to be appointed by the king, and to be responsible to him alone, a Senate in opposition to the crown was barely conceivable.

“It may emphatically be said,” observes the judicious Russian historian, Solovev, “that the tidings of the Swedish Revolution was the most unpleasant *contretemps* in foreign affairs which Catharine II had hitherto encountered.” She saw in it the triumph of her arch-enemy, France, with the prolongation of the costly Turkish war as its immediate result, to say nothing of innumerable future complications. The Russian chancellor, Panin, regarded “the unfortunate affair” as of the greatest importance to Russia, and likely to

be "very dangerous" in its consequences. But the absence of troops on the Finnish border, and the bad condition of the frontier fortresses of Vilmanstrand and Fredrikshamn constrained the Empress, already occupied with the Polish speculation which was to compensate her for her losses in the south, to listen to Gustavus's pacific assurances, and stay her hand for the present, especially as Frederick II also counselled moderation. But she took the precaution of concluding a fresh secret alliance with Denmark, in which the Swedish Revolution of 1772 was significantly described as "an act of violence," constituting a *casus foederis*, which justified both powers in seizing the first favourable opportunity for intervention to restore the Swedish constitution of 1720.

The period elapsing between 1772 and 1786 was often alluded to by Gustavus III as his "happy years." They were marked by salutary domestic measures, such as the abolition of judicial torture, reintroduced after the death of Charles XII, the re-establishment of the freedom of the press, the regulation of the finances, and reforms sweeping but necessary in the army, navy, and judicature. In Liljeprantz, Liljestråle, Count Carl Sparre, Ehrensvärd, Trolle, and Toll, Gustavus found able and devoted co-operators; so that, when the king summoned the Estates to assemble at Stockholm on September 30, 1778 (the anticipated birth of an heir to the throne was the ostensible cause of their convocation), he could give a brilliant account of his six years' stewardship. Never was a parliament more obsequious or a king more gracious. "There was no room for a single No during the whole session." Everyone had come thither to approve and to applaud. For the first time for fifty years the course of Swedish politics ran smoothly in its natural channel. There was scarcely a glimpse of a legitimate parliamentary opposition. Nevertheless, little as he suspected it, the Riksdag of 1778 had roughly shaken the popularity which Gustavus III so ardently desired. Short as the session

had been, it was quite long enough to open the eyes of the deputies to the fact that their political supremacy had departed. They had changed places with the king. He was now indeed their sovereign lord; and, for all his gentleness, the jealousy with which he guarded, the vigour with which he enforced the prerogative, plainly showed that he meant to remain so. Even the few who were prudent and patriotic enough to acquiesce in the change by no means liked it; while the many who were neither prudent nor patriotic looked back with wistful eyes upon the past, when the emissaries of France and Russia, with their pockets stuffed full with livres and roubles, waylaid Swedish Riksdagsmen in the very lobbies of Parliament, when every member had his money value, and a judicious trimmer might make his fortune by a single well-timed vote. But it was not till after eight years more that actual trouble began. The Riksdag of 1778 had been obsequious; the Riksdag of 1786 was mutinous. Many and various were the causes of this reaction—love of change; disappointment, for, naturally, the Revolution could not satisfy everyone; a succession of phenomenally bad harvests, which sensibly increased the burden of taxation; the deplorable results of Gustavus's one serious blunder, the attempt to make the distillation of spirits a government monopoly; the scandalous simony which marked the ecclesiastical administration of his vicar-general, the facile and easy-going Schröderheim; and, above all, the discontent of the gentry when once they fairly grasped the fact that they had obtained no adequate compensation for the loss of their political influence. The consequence was that nearly all the royal propositions were either rejected outright, or so modified that Gustavus himself withdrew them; and, when he dismissed the Estates, the speech from the throne held out no prospect of their speedy reconvocation.

The Riksdag of 1786 marks a turning-point in the history of Gustavus III. Henceforth we observe a determination on

his part to rule without a Parliament; a passage, cautious and gradual, yet unflinching, from semi-constitutionalism to semi-absolutism. New men of his own choosing, intelligent enough to appreciate his designs, and audacious enough to execute them, now take the place of his officially responsible ministers. Toll, the resolute and inscrutable, hitherto kept in the background, now emerges into prominence and power. Ruuth, a *protégé* of Toll's, takes charge of the finances. The unpopular Schröderheim disappears to make way for Olaf Wallqvist, the eloquent and masterful bishop of Wexiö, and for the reticent and dangerous prebendary Nordin—both of them "the willing tools of despotism," but also statesmen of the first rank. Now too appear that dashing adventurer, Gustavus Armfelt, the "Alcibiades of the North," whom Gustavus picked up at Spa in 1780, and the diplomatists, Franz Taube, Hans af Fersen, and Henrik von Essen, all ultra-royalists of brilliant talents.

It is a debatable question whether a man of Gustavus's genius could or could not have found means of ruling constitutionally to the end; anyhow he never seriously tried to do so. It is an equally debatable question whether the independence of Sweden could have been secured by any other means than the temporary semi-absolutism which Gustavus finally adopted. Swedish historians of the Fryxell type, ignorant as they were of Russian history, have ludicrously underestimated the reality and imminence of the danger to which Sweden was always exposed from her eastern neighbour. Gustavus, never blind to that danger, exhausted all his unusual powers of blandishment to avert it by flattering and mollifying Catharine, whose genius he sincerely admired; but the time came (it may be dated from the menacing letter which he received from her, at Venice, in 1784) when he could no longer doubt that Russia must be beaten on the battlefield before she would consent to let go the hold upon Sweden which the Caps had given her. He fortified himself provisionally by fresh subsidy conventions with France (Treaties of Versailles, July 1 and 17,

1784), and bided his opportunity, which came when, at the end of 1787, Catharine II found herself unexpectedly involved in a second war with Turkey, for which she was quite unprepared, though she had done everything to provoke it. Gustavus at once began to arm, and, in April, sent a military envoy to St Petersburg to provoke a rupture by categorically demanding an explanation of the purely imaginary Russian armaments in Finland. The pacific assurances Gustavus received from the anxious and desponding empress seriously embarrassed him, for his own constitution prohibited him from beginning an offensive war. But he had now gone too far to retreat, and after almost extorting the reluctant approval of the Senate by a mendacious assurance that Russia was mobilising 200,000 men on the shores of the Baltic, he took the decisive step. On Midsummer Day he embarked for Finland, arriving at Helsingfors on July 8, 1788.

The army which now quitted Sweden was superior in numbers and equipment to any host which Sweden had put into the field since the Thirty Years' War. Nothing short of a miracle seemed able to save the Russian capital. For the first time in her life Catharine II was completely taken by surprise. Though repeatedly warned of the designs of her restless neighbour, she had always ridiculed them. "Do you really think this madman will attack me?" she asked her private secretary, Khrapovitsky, incredulously. But intercepted despatches from Poland suddenly opened the eyes of the empress to her danger; and almost simultaneously a note from Gustavus himself fell upon the court of St Petersburg like a bombshell. Never since the foundation of the empire had a Russian monarch received such an insolent and dictatorial missive. The French ambassador at St Petersburg declared that the Padishah himself would not have dared to address such language to the meanest of his Pashas. If Gustavus had just won six pitched battles, he could not have offered Catharine peace on more humiliating terms; he de-

manded the cession of Carelia and Livonia to Sweden, the restoration of the Crimea to Turkey, and the instant disbandment of the Russian forces.

Catharine was beside herself with rage. She protested that Peter the Great had made a great mistake in building the Russian capital so near to Sweden. But her courage rose with her difficulties, and her military preparations were pushed on with the most determined energy. Nevertheless her hasty levies would have proved but a sorry defence had not a mutiny in the Swedish army paralysed all the efforts of Gustavus. The majority of the Swedish officers had already conspired to stop by any means a war which, if successful, would infallibly increase the royal power and prestige, and proportionately diminish their own. The first step was taken at Hussula on July 31, when the Finnish regiments revolted, and compelled Gustavus to retreat to Liikala. From Liikala, on August 9, the rebels addressed a note to the empress, apologising for beginning a war "with the motives of which they had not been sufficiently acquainted," suggesting that the surest guarantee for a durable peace was the creation of a complete and independent Finland, and begging for a speedy reply in order that "the representatives of the nation" might decide whether they should lay down their arms or not. Catharine, much too wary to compromise herself by an open alliance with a possibly insignificant clique of conspirators, simply commended the good intentions of "the Finnish Nation," and hinted at the assembling of a Finnish Landtag, under Russian protection, to settle preliminaries. The army meanwhile had further retreated within Swedish territory to Anjala; and there the leaders proceeded to draw up a declaration justifying their conduct on the ground that, being citizens as well as soldiers, they were bound to protest against an unconstitutional war. This document they had the effrontery to send to the king, not by an adjutant, in the usual way, but by an itinerant peasant postman.

All this time Gustavus was virtually a prisoner on board his yacht, the *Amphion*, at Kymmenegård, with no power to check the progress of the mutiny. Yet honour forbade his flying from Finland; and any negotiation with the empress he rightly regarded as "an act of political suicide." His one remaining hope was that the Danes might declare war against him. A Danish invasion would imperatively require his presence in Sweden, and therefore justify his departure from Finland; and he was clear-sighted enough to perceive that such a contingency "would open the eyes of the Swedes to the reality of their danger, and rally the people round the throne." When therefore the news reached him that the Danes, at the instigation of Russia, had actually declared war against Sweden, he exclaimed, "We are saved!" and set out at once for Stockholm, leaving his brother Charles commander-in-chief in his stead. At the little seaport of Lovisa he met the delegates of the Anjala conspirators with their declaration. Gustavus returned the document unopened, with the curt message, "I do not treat with rebels." He already saw his way to his ultimate triumph.

On September 24, 1788, 12,000 Danes, under the prince of Hesse, crossed the Swedish border, and advanced rapidly and unopposed through Bohuslän upon Gothenburg, occupying *en route* the fortresses of Venersborg and Elfsborg. The destruction of Gothenburg, the commercial capital of Sweden, meant the ruin of half the kingdom. Yet the panic-stricken commandant, openly declaring resistance to be impossible, was preparing for flight, and the Danes were but a day's march from the defenceless city, when at midnight, on September 25, a solitary horseman presented himself at the gates, and loudly demanded admission. It was Gustavus, who, a few days after his arrival in Sweden, had hastened to the Dales, as Gustavus Vasa had done before him, and, after appealing successfully to the patriotism and loyalty of the peasantry, and raising two brigades of 6000 men, had ridden 250 miles in forty-eight

hours, to put heart into the garrison by announcing the arrival of reinforcements. The face of things completely changed. Fresh earthworks were thrown up; the ramparts were planted with fresh cannon; a corps of 1200 volunteers was raised from among the citizens; the local militia and the first companies of the Dalesmen kept pouring in day after day; so that, in less than a week, the king had a garrison of 7000 men at his disposal, and was able to reject with dignity a summons from the Danes, two days later, to surrender the city.

Fortunately he was no longer acting alone. Great Britain and Prussia, both alarmed by Russian ambition, had warmly approved and secretly encouraged Gustavus's warlike diversion; and, when Russia had retaliated by inducing Denmark to invade Sweden, under the terms of the Treaty of Copenhagen, the neutral powers felt bound to interfere on behalf of the king of Sweden, who was really doing their work in the north. They were not disposed, it is true, to go the length of an actual war with Russia; but they were quite determined that Sweden should not be sacrificed. The initiative was taken by the Hon. Hugh Elliot, the British minister at Copenhagen; on November 5, at the Danish headquarters at Uddevalla, a convention was signed for the evacuation of Sweden; and a fortnight later not a single Danish soldier remained on Swedish soil. The Danes disposed of, Gustavus had his hands free to set his house in order. His first step was to convoke a Riksdag. So long as the temper of the nation was uncertain, so long as a Riksdag might afford Sweden's foreign foes an opportunity of interfering in her domestic affairs, the king had resolutely closed his ears against the chorus of timid counsellors who had implored him to summon the Estates. But now that he was sure of his people he hesitated no longer; and on December 8, 1788, a royal proclamation, issued from Gothenburg, invited the Estates of the realm to assemble at Stockholm on the 26th of January following.

From the first, the temper of the four Orders was unmistakeable. Of the 950 gentlemen who sat in the Riddarhus during this Riksdag, more than 700 were so-called "patriots," i.e. those who defended the Anjala treason. On the other hand, the three lower Orders were heart and soul with Gustavus. It was only natural that the burgesses and the peasantry should compare their own patriotic conduct, during the last three months, with the cowardice and treachery of their noble colleagues; and such a comparison naturally led to the reflection that a military caste which so shamefully shirked its easy obligations was unworthy of "its inordinate privileges." Moreover the sincere admiration which the lower Orders felt for the courage and patriotism of the king was nourished by a growing belief in his inherent superiority, and a not irrational hope that he would reward the services of his faithful commoners while he chastened the insolence of his presumptuous nobility. The hostility of the non-noble classes to the aristocracy expressed itself freely in countless scurrilous lampoons and ballads, which described the well-born officers as poltroons and the paid spies of Russia.

The salient features of this momentous and dramatic Riksdag can only be indicated in the barest outline. The day after its formal opening, on February 2, Gustavus urgently demanded a Secret Committee of Supply. The three Lower Estates at once elected their delegates; but the Riddarhus proved so refractory that Gustavus, after waiting a fortnight, summoned the Estates to meet in congress. Then in a fulminating oration he bitterly upbraided the nobility for their unpatriotic obstruction, ordering them to withdraw to their separate chamber, and there apologise to their marshal whom they had grossly insulted. The same afternoon he laid before the delegates of the three lower Orders "An Act of Union and Security," which substituted for the existing constitution an almost purely monarchical form of government, expressly reserving, indeed, the power of the purse to

the Estates, but giving the king an absolutely free hand in foreign affairs.

Though Gustavus bid high for the support of the Commoners (clauses 2-4 of the new constitution actually breaking down completely, and once for all, the distinction between noble and non-noble), the Talmen of the priests and burgesses lacked the courage to submit such a revolutionary measure to their respective Estates; and Gustavus was compelled personally to introduce his new constitution to the Estates in congress. He prepared the way by an act of authority sufficient to overawe the refractory and persuade the lukewarm. On the evening of February 16 the burgher guards of Stockholm arrested the prominent members of the noble opposition, twenty-one in number; and on the following morning Gustavus introduced to the assembled Estates the Act of Union and Security, which he described as a measure absolutely indispensable to their common welfare. Thrice he solemnly asked the Estates whether they accepted it or not? An energetic and unanimous "Aye!" from the burgesses and peasants, completely drowning the mingled "Ayes" and "Noes" of the clergy, and the loud dissent of the majority of the nobility, was the immediate response. It was all so quickly done that nobody had time to protest; but at the last moment, in response to a touching appeal from his friend Adlerbeth, Gustavus vouchsafed the nobility some little time for further deliberation. That he considered their assent a mere superfluity is evident from the fact that two days later the three lower Estates, without waiting for the decision of the nobility, signed and sealed the "Act of Union and Security" in the king's presence, which, being approved by a majority of the Estates, thus became law.

Ways and means for carrying on the war were next considered. The lower Estates readily agreed to guarantee the national debt, and to vote subsidies sufficient to cover all expenses (including the cost of the war) till the next Riksdag,

i.e. for an indefinite period; but the Riddarhus would only grant the subsidies for two years. Since in all subsidy questions the consent of all four Estates was indispensable, the king, at the risk of his life (it must never be forgotten that throughout he had no regular military force at his disposal), on April 27 repaired unattended to the Riddarhus, took his seat in the presidential chair, and appealed to the nobles this once to waive their strict right of fixing the amount and period of the war tax, and patriotically to follow the example of their non-noble brethren. He then twice put the question: "Do the nobility and gentry grant the subsidy till the next Riksdag?" and smilingly ignoring altogether a perfect tempest of "Noes!" declared with imperturbable composure that the "Ayes" had it, ordered the resolution of the House to be entered in its minutes, and sent off a deputation to the three lower Estates to inform them of the result.

On the following day, April 28, this stormy Riksdag was "blown out," to the inexpressible relief of the king's friends, who expected every moment to hear of his assassination. On May 11 a royal decree abolished the historic Råd, or Senate, after an existence of 600 years; and on June 3 Gustavus, triumphant at home, left Stockholm for the seat of war. The Anjala conspirators had already been arrested and put on their trial; and the Act of Union and Security made further treason impossible.

The campaign of 1789 was honourable to the Swedish arms. On June 1, 10,000 Russians had invaded north Finland, but were driven back by General Stedingk at Porosalmi (June 13), while Gustavus himself, at the head of the southern army, defeated the Russians at Ultismalm (June 28), thus relieving the pressure upon Stedingk, who won a fresh victory at Parkumäki (July 21). The rival fleets encountered each other off the island of Öland, when an engagement ensued (July 26) which would have ended in a brilliant Swedish

victory but for the unaccountable remissness of Captain Liljehorn, who failed to support the admiral, Duke Charles, at the critical moment. Equally indecisive was a fierce two days' battle between the Swedish galley fleet, under K. A. Ehrensvärd, and two Russian fleets off Svensksund, south-west of Fredrikshamn (Aug. 24).

All through the winter of 1789-'90 Gustavus laboured to make his fleets overpoweringly predominant, so as to be able to end the war by one decisive blow. His plan was, under cover of the ship fleet, and with the cooperation of the land army, to attack St Petersburg itself with the galley fleet, the attention of the enemy being distracted by a simultaneous movement against the province of Savolaks. On May 10, 1790, Gustavus, after defeating the Russians on land at Valkiala, took command of the galleys, and five days later destroyed a Russian galley fleet in Fredrikshamn harbour. Duke Charles, with the ship fleet, subsequently (June 3—5) drove the Russian men-of-war away from Cronstadt, to the great alarm of Catharine, who heard the cannonade in her palace; whereupon the two Swedish fleets entered the Gulf of Viborg. They penetrated, however, too far, were surrounded by vastly superior forces, and only cut their way out to sea with the utmost difficulty and the loss of one-fourth of their effective strength (Battle of the Viborg Gauntlet, July 3).

After this mishap Gustavus retired to Svensksund, where he received reinforcements which raised his fleet to 190 vessels with crews amounting to 14,000 men. Thereupon he resumed the struggle, and on 9—10 July, won the most glorious naval victory ever gained by the Swedish arms, the Russians losing one-third of their fleet and 7000 men.

A month after the victory of Svensksund peace was signed between Sweden and Russia at the little village of Värälä (Aug. 14, 1790). Only eight months before, Catharine had haughtily declared that "the odious and revolting aggressiveness" of the king of Sweden would be "forgiven" only

if he "testified his repentance" by agreeing to a peace confirming the treaties of Åbo and Nystad, granting a general and unlimited amnesty to all rebels, and consenting to a guarantee by the Swedish Riksdag ("as it would be imprudent to confide in his good faith alone") for the observance of peace in the future. The Peace of Värälä saved Sweden from any such humiliating concessions. The increasing difficulties of Catharine, and the shuffling of Gustavus's allies, Great Britain and Prussia, had convinced both sovereigns of the necessity of adjusting their differences without any foreign intervention. On October 19, 1791, Gustavus went still further, and took the bold but by no means imprudent step of concluding an eight years' defensive alliance with the empress, who thereby bound herself to pay her new ally annual subsidies amounting to 300,000 roubles.

Mutual respect and, still more, a common antagonism to revolutionary France united these two great rulers in their declining years. Gustavus now aimed at forming a league of princes against the Jacobins: and every other consideration was subordinated thereto. His profound knowledge of popular assemblies enabled him, alone among contemporary sovereigns, accurately to gauge, from the first, the scope and bearing of the French Revolution. But he was hampered by poverty and the jealousy of the other European powers, and, after showing once more his unrivalled mastery over masses of men at the brief Gefle Riksdag Jan. 22—Feb. 24, 1792, he fell a victim to a wide-spread aristocratic conspiracy. Shot in the back by Anckarström at a midnight masquerade at the Stockholm Opera House on March 16, 1792, he expired on the 29th. Although he may be charged with many foibles and extravagances, Gustavus III was indisputably one of the greatest sovereigns of the eighteenth century. Unfortunately his genius never had full scope, and his opportunity came too late.

CHAPTER XIV.

SWEDEN, 1792-1814.

THE first act of Duke Charles was to set aside the last codicil made by Gustavus III on his death-bed, whereby he had associated Armfelt and other personal friends with his brother in the regency. The regicides were treated with comparative indulgence. Anckarström, indeed, was put in irons, whipped through the town on April 19, 20, and 21, and beheaded on the 27th, after previously losing his right hand; but Horn, Ribbing, Liljehorn, and Ehrensvärd, all of whom richly deserved the same fate, were only expelled the kingdom, while Pechlin, the prime mover in the conspiracy, was imprisoned in the fortress of Varberg, where he died in 1796. The clemency shown to the murderers of their idolised master naturally incensed the leading Gustavians; and they rightly attributed this miscarriage of justice, as well as their own supersession, to the influence of Reuterholm, the bosom friend of the duke-regent, who had recalled him to Sweden immediately after the death of the late king, given him a seat in the Council and blindly submitted to his dictation.

Gustaf Adolf Reuterholm, born in 1756, was the son of the anti-Gustavian senator, E. K. Reuterholm. His boundless vanity and vindictive jealousy during his four years of administration speedily earned for him deep and universal hatred. His abolition of the press-censorship (July 11, 1792),

a measure issued a week after his return to Sweden, was not so much a concession to the spirit of the age, as a transparent attack upon the whole Gustavian system, and was immediately followed by the wholesale removal of the leading Gustavians, who included amongst them the best talent of the country.

It was a melancholy period, full of combustible material, and rich in singular contrasts, a leaden age succeeding, as it has well been said, an age of gold. The upper circles bitterly complained that the young king was surrounded by crypto-Jacobins ; while the middle classes, deprived of the stimulating leadership of the anti-aristocratic "Prince Charming," and becoming more and more inoculated with French political ideas, drifted into an antagonism not merely to hereditary nobility, but to hereditary monarchy likewise. Everything was vacillating and uncertain ; and the general instability was reflected even in foreign affairs, now that the master-hand of Gustavus III was withdrawn. The renewed efforts of Catharine II to intervene in Sweden's domestic affairs were indeed energetically repulsed, but without tact or discretion, so that the good understanding which had existed between the two countries since the Peace of Värälä was seriously impaired, especially when Reuterholm's proclivities induced him to adopt what was generally considered an indecently friendly attitude towards the government at Paris. Despite the execution of Louis XVI (Jan. 21, 1793), Sweden, in the hope of obtaining considerable subsidies, recognised the new French Republic ; and secret negotiations for contracting a fresh alliance were actually begun in May of the same year, till the menacing protests of Catharine, supported as they were by all the other European powers, finally induced Sweden to suspend them.

The negotiations with the French regicides exacerbated the hatred which the Gustavians already felt for the duke's "Jacobin" counsellors. Smarting beneath their grievances and seriously believing that not only the young king's crown, but his very

life, was in danger, they formed a conspiracy, the soul of which was Gustavus Armfelt, to overthrow the government of the duke-regent, with the aid of a Russian fleet, supported by a rising of the Dalecarlians. Armfelt's chief intermediary at Stockholm was his mistress, the frivolous but amiable Magdalena Rudensköld, through whom he hoped to persuade the young king to write a letter to Catharine II, inviting her cooperation. The government discovered the plot by opening Armfelt's letters. Armfelt himself succeeded in eluding the squadron sent to seize him, and escaping to Russia; but the other conspirators were arrested in Sweden at the end of 1792, and put upon their trial. Armfelt, Ehrensvärd, and Magdalena Rudensköld were condemned to death; and even Toll and the king's governor, Count Nils Gyldenstolpe, against whom nothing definite could be proved, were treated with the utmost severity. The death-sentences were indeed remitted in the cases of Ehrensvärd and Magdalena Rudensköld, but the unfortunate lady was pilloried in the great square of Stockholm, to the intense indignation of the public, who regarded her degrading punishment as a mean act of vengeance on the part of a rejected lover, it being notorious that the duke-regent had solicited the lady's favours in vain some years before. The whole proceeding, indeed, was injurious to the reputation of the government; and it was significantly remarked that those who had simply intrigued for a change in the administration had been treated far more rigorously than the assassins of the late king.

The one bright side of this gloomy and sordid period was the *rapprochement* between the Scandinavian kingdoms during the revolutionary wars. Thus on March 27, 1794, a neutrality compact was formed between Denmark and Sweden; and their united squadrons patrolled the North Sea to protect their merchantmen from the British cruisers. This approximation between the two governments was happily followed by friendly feelings between the two nations; under the pressure of

a common danger, the consciousness of the kinship of the two Scandinavian peoples awoke for the first time on both sides of the Sound, and their secular national hatred began to yield to sentiments of amity and fraternity. But Reuterholm, not content with the support of Denmark, presently resumed his coquetry with the French Republic, which was officially recognised by the Swedish government on April 23, 1795. In return Sweden obtained a subsidy of £56,000; and a treaty between the two powers was actually signed on Sept. 14, 1795.

At home the Swedish government, which had at first been semi-Jacobin, ended as ultra-reactionary. The cause of this change of front was an insignificant riot in Stockholm, which so alarmed Reuterholm that he signed an edict threatening all printers who published anything relating to the constitutions of the French Republic or the United States of America with the loss of their privileges. In March, 1795, he followed this up by closing the Swedish Academy as the nursery of revolution, because A. G. Silsverstolpe, in his inaugural address, had ventured to disapprove of Gustavus III's *coup d'état* of 1789. An attempt to regain the friendship of Russia, which had broken off diplomatic relations with Sweden, was made in 1795, when Reuterholm did his utmost to promote a marriage between the young king and the empress's granddaughter Alexandra. In August, 1796, the duke-regent and Reuterholm visited St Petersburg for the purpose; negotiations for a new Russo-Swedish alliance were set on foot; and the betrothal was actually fixed for September 22, when the whole arrangement foundered on the obstinate refusal of Gustavus IV to allow his destined bride liberty of worship according to the rites of the Greek orthodox church. The festivities were broken off; on October 1 the Swedish guests quitted the Russian capital; and the grief and shame of such a rebuff undoubtedly accelerated the death of Catharine II, who expired suddenly on November 17, 1796. A fortnight earlier, on November 1, 1796, in accordance with the will of Gustavus III,

the young king, now in his eighteenth year, took the government into his own hands.

Gustavus IV had been very carefully educated, and had grown up serious and conscientious, and with a deep sense of duty. Of his severe Lutheran orthodoxy we have already had a characteristic specimen. Unfortunately, if his heart was sound, his brain was incredibly narrow; and from early childhood he had displayed a haughtiness and an obstinacy which disconcerted the best efforts of admirable tutors, though nobody seems to have even suspected that serious mental derangement lay at the root of his abnormal piety. On the contrary, there were many who prematurely congratulated themselves on the fact that Sweden had now no disturbing genius, but an economical, God-fearing, commonplace monarch to deal with. Gustavus's prompt dismissal of the generally detested Reuterholm added still further to his popularity. The old Gustavians came trooping back, joyous and confident. Toll was placed at the head of the war office, with a seat in the Council; Samuel af Ugglas, one of Gustavus III's ablest officials, was created a count and governor-general of Stockholm; Fersen, Taube, and Ehrenheim controlled foreign affairs; nearly all those implicated in the so-called Armfelt conspiracy were pardoned and employed; while Armfelt himself, though he did not return to Sweden till 1801, enjoyed from the first the king's entire confidence.

On October 31, 1797, Gustavus married Frederica Dorothea of Baden, a marriage which might have led to a war with Russia but for the fanatical hatred of the French Republic shared by the Emperor Paul and Gustavus IV, which served as a bond of union between them. Indeed, the king's horror of Jacobinism was morbid in its intensity, and drove him to adopt all sorts of reactionary measures and to postpone his coronation for some years, so as to avoid calling together a Riksdag, till the disorder of the finances, caused partly by the continental war and partly by the almost total

failure of the crops in 1798 and 1799, compelled him to summon the Estates to Norrköping in March, 1800. On April 3 the king was crowned; and four days later, on the occasion of the public homage, the nobility were compelled at last to adopt Gustavus III's detested Act of Union and Security, chiefly, it is said, through Toll's threat, in case of their non-compliance, to reveal the names of all the persons suspected of complicity in the murder of Gustavus III, a list of whom he had in his possession. Toll, indeed, with his usual adroit audacity, succeeded in overawing the mutinous First Estate throughout this Riksdag, while the lower Estates, ably manipulated by the skilful old Gustavian wire-pullers, Wallqvist, Nordin, and Håkansson, were effusively loyal. Thus the Riksdag, which was "blown out" on June 14, 1800, consented to the redemption of £4,750,000 of the national debt, with the assistance of the Bank of Sweden, though ultimately the scheme could only be carried through after Wismar had been mortgaged to the duke of Mecklenburg for £292,000.

Shortly after the Riksdag rose, a notable change took place in Sweden's foreign policy. In December, 1800, Denmark, Sweden, and Russia acceded to a second Armed Neutrality of the North, directed against Great Britain. We shall see how the British government retaliated on Denmark; as for Sweden, the arsenal at Carlsrona was saved from the fate of Copenhagen only by the assassination of the emperor Paul, which was followed by another change of system in the North. Hitherto Sweden had kept aloof from continental complications; but the arrest and execution of the Duc D'Enghien in 1804 inspired Gustavus IV, who was just then visiting his wife's relations at Baden not far from the opening scene of the outrage, with a detestation of Bonaparte which blinded him to every prudential consideration, and ultimately took the form of religious mania. Thus he saw in the new French emperor the "Beast" of the Apocalypse whom he himself was divinely

appointed to overthrow; and, when a general coalition was formed against Napoleon, he was one of the first to join it (Dec. 3, 1804), pledging himself to send an army-corps to co-operate with the English and Russians in driving the enemy out of Hanover and Holland. Though without the slightest military capacity, and even deficient in personal courage, Gustavus proposed to conduct the enterprise in person; but becoming involved in a senseless quarrel with Frederick William II, he remained inactive in Pomerania instead of sending the promised contingent to assist the Russians in Hanover; and when, at last (Dec. 1805), he led his 6000 men towards the Elbe district, the Third Coalition had already been dissipated by the victories of Ulm and Austerlitz.

In 1806 a rupture between Sweden and Prussia was prevented only by Napoleon's assault upon the latter power; whereupon Gustavus, instead of taking advantage of this unlooked-for opportunity of cooperating against the common enemy, returned to Sweden, leaving his troops idle in Pomerania and Lauenburg. Napoleon now tried to win over Sweden; but Gustavus rejected every overture. On January 28, 1807, Mortier invaded Swedish Pomerania and blockaded Stralsund, which was so ably defended by Hans von Essen and Armfelt, that, on April 1, the French retired with the loss of 1300 men. But not for long. After the crushing victory of Friedland, Napoleon detached Brune, with 30,000 men, against Swedish Pomerania; and Stralsund capitulated on August 20. The Swedish army of 13,000 men, which had retired to Rügen, now seemed irretrievably lost. It was saved however by the tact and subtlety of Toll, now in supreme command, who cajoled the French marshal into a convention, whereby the Swedish army, with all its muniments of war, was permitted to return unmolested to Sweden (September 7, 1807). For this exploit Toll received his marshal's *bâton*.

At Tilsit the emperor Alexander had undertaken to compel "Russia's geographical enemy," as Napoleon designated

Sweden, to accede to the newly-established Continental System. Gustavus IV naturally rejected all the proposals of Alexander to close the Baltic against the English; but he took no measures to defend Finland against Russia, though during the autumn of 1807 it was notorious that the Tsar was preparing to attack the Grand Duchy. On February 21, 1808, a Russian army crossed the Finnish border, without any previous declaration of war. On April 2 the king ordered a general levy of 30,000 men; but, while two army-corps under Armfelt and Toll, together with a British contingent of 10,000 men under Moore, were stationed in Scania and on the Norwegian border, in anticipation of an attack from Denmark, which, at the instigation of Napoleon, had simultaneously declared war against Sweden, the little Finnish army was left altogether unsupported.

The beginning of the Finnish campaign was anything but glorious, although the army in Finland, with dwindling strength but unbroken courage, sustained the unequal struggle with the Russian colossus. The commander-in-chief, Vilhelm Klingspor, giving up everything for lost, retreated northwards to Uleåborg; and the impregnable fortress of Sveaborg surrendered without striking a blow. The latter event is indeed the most miserable and painful episode in the military history of Sweden. The gigantic creation of Gustavus III's patriotism and Ehrensvärd's genius, built upon granite in the midst of inaccessible islands, with a garrison of more than 6000 men, 2000 guns, inexhaustible stores, and 110 war galleys in the harbour, which should have been the bulwark of the Grand Duchy and the rallying-point of the whole Finnish army, was surrendered (May 3), after losing *five men*, by its cowardly commandant K. O. Cronstedt, although the besiegers had only 10,000 men and 46 pieces of artillery. After such a collapse the heroism of the northern army, though it more than redeemed the honour of Finland, could not save her independence. The principal heroes of this struggle, which

Runeberg has immortalised in *Fänrik Ståls Sägner*, were Karl Johan Adlercreutz, Georg Karl von Döbeln, J. A. Cronstedt, and Johan August Sandels. For fully five months (May—Sept. 1808) these gallant officers, with only 12,000 men, kept at bay the Russian forces, which were gradually augmented from 16,000 to 55,000 men, winning no fewer than six pitched battles, of which the most notable were Revolaks (April 27), Lappo (July 14), lasting thirteen hours, and Juutas (September 13), which compelled the Russians to grant the armistice of Lochteå (September 29). Unsupported as they were by the home government, the gallant Finns were compelled at last to yield to superior numbers; and, by the Convention of Olkijoki (Nov. 19), Klercker, the commander-in-chief, surrendered to the Russians all the land east of the Kemi, and retired to Torneå.

By this time not merely the independence of Finland, but the very existence of Sweden herself was at stake, for, in accordance with a compact made with Napoleon for the partition of Sweden, the Emperor Alexander was preparing to attack Stockholm from the north and east, while the Danes cooperated from the west. The crisis was acute; the king clearly had lost his head. His violence had alienated his most faithful supporters, while his obstinate incompetence paralysed the national efforts. To remove a madman by force was the one remaining expedient; and this was successfully accomplished by a conspiracy of officers of the western army, headed by Adlersparre, the Anckarsvärd, and Adlercreutz, who marched rapidly from Scania to Stockholm. On March 13, 1809, seven of the conspirators broke into the royal apartments in the palace unannounced, seized the king, and conducted him to the château of Gripsholm; Duke Charles was easily persuaded to accept the leadership of a provisional government which was proclaimed the same day; and a Riksdag, hastily summoned, solemnly approved of the revolution. On March 29, Gustavus, in order to save the crown for his son, voluntarily abdicated;

but on May 10 the Estates, dominated by the army, declared that not merely Gustavus but his whole posterity had forfeited the throne. On June 5 the duke-regent was proclaimed king under the title of Charles XIII, after accepting the new liberal constitution, which was ratified by the Riksdag the same day. In December Gustavus IV and his family were transported to Germany, ultimately settling in Switzerland, where the unhappy king died on February 7, 1837.

The new king was at best a useful stop-gap, in no way likely to interfere with the free course of the liberal revolution which had placed him on the throne. Peace was what the exhausted nation now required; and negotiations had already been opened at Fredrickshamn. The Russians demanded the cession of Finland, the Åland Islands, and all Västerbotten between the rivers Kalix and Kemi. Even now Sweden could not submit to such humiliating terms; hostilities were resumed, and 8000 men were despatched from Stockholm to Ratan, a place some miles north of Ume, near which lay the main Russian army under Sergius Kamenski. Taking advantage of the cautious and dilatory tactics of the Swedish commanders, Kamenski defeated them at Sävarsbruk (Aug. 19, 1809) and again at Ratan, compelled them to re-embark, and then pursued his triumphant march through north Sweden to Pite. After this fiasco, which would not have happened if the greatest Swedish strategist, Döbeln, who was actually on the spot, had been employed or at least consulted, the Swedish government yielded to the inevitable; and peace was obtained by the sacrifice of Finland, the Åland Islands, "the foreposts of Stockholm," as Napoleon rightly described them, and Västerbotten as far as the rivers Torneå and Muonio (Treaty of Fredrickshamn, Sept. 17, 1809). Peace was also concluded with Denmark at Jönköping (Dec. 10, 1809), and with France at Paris (Jan. 6, 1810), Sweden getting back Pomerania on condition that she closed her ports against all British goods.

On December 24, 1809, the question of the succession to

the throne was revived by the sudden illness of the king; and the Gustavians, who had never ceased their agitation in favour of Prince Gustavus, son of Gustavus IV, despite the election by the Riksdag of Prince Charles Augustus of Augustenburg, endeavoured to prolong and divide the Riksdag, in the hope of getting the new constitution repealed. Charles Augustus arrived in Sweden in January, 1810. His amiability and manifest nobility of character soon made him highly popular everywhere except in the high aristocratic circles, where the Gustavians were strongest; between him and the powerful Fersen family in particular there was considerable tension. The sudden death of the prince while reviewing the Scanian troops at Qvidinge (May 28, 1810) was regarded as a national calamity; and its immediate effect was to inflame the worst passions of the already intensely hostile political parties. To Adlersparre and the military revolutionary faction it was a terrible blow; and, in the not ungrounded fear that the Gustavians might seize the opportunity of bringing about a counter revolution in favour of Prince Gustavus, they descended to the most infamous expedients, even employing the baser portion of the Stockholm press to spread abroad the rumour that Charles Augustus had been poisoned by the Fersens, notwithstanding the fact that three of the most eminent doctors in Scandinavia, after a careful and conscientious autopsy, had pronounced the death to be due to natural causes.

The popular excitement was raised to frenzy by the publication of a fable in verse entitled "The Ravens," which plainly enough indicated Count Hans Axel af Fersen and his sister, the Countess Piper, as the late crown-prince's murderers. On the occasion of the state funeral, on June 20, 1810, Count Hans Axel af Fersen, who, in virtue of his office of earl-marshal, occupied a conspicuous position in the cortège, was dragged from his carriage and literally worried to death by the mob, while the troops on guard, whose officers had received secret instructions not to meet force by force in case of a popular

disturbance, looked on while the battered and bleeding earl-marshall was slowly done to death, without raising a hand to save him. The mystery which surrounds this hideous massacre of the noblest of the Gustavians is still impenetrable. The crime is said to have been the unforeseen result of a deliberate design on the part of the military party to insult and terrorise the high aristocracy in the person of its leader, Count Fersen, by means of the rabble who, as usual, got out of hand and exceeded the wishes of its instigators. But the mysterious official instructions given to the troops beforehand, and their consequent apathy, arouse still darker suspicion of a premeditated assassination in the highest quarters.

A new heir to the throne had now to be chosen. The king and the Senate were in favour of the late crown-prince's brother, Christian Frederick of Augustenburg; and Napoleon, who was at once informed of their wishes, declared that he had no objection to the candidate. But a large part of the Swedish army, in view of future complications with Russia, were in favour of electing a soldier, preferably a French marshal; and of all the French marshals, Bernadotte, prince of Ponte Corvo, was most popular in Sweden because of the kindness he had shown to the Swedish prisoners during the late war with Denmark. The matter was decided by one of the Swedish couriers, Baron Karl Otto Mörner, who, entirely on his own initiative, offered the succession to the Swedish crown to Bernadotte. Bernadotte hastened to communicate Mörner's offer to Napoleon, who treated the whole affair as an absurdity with which it was beneath his dignity to meddle. Bernadotte thereupon informed Mörner (June 27, 1810) that he would not refuse the honour if he were duly elected. Although the Swedish government, amazed at Mörner's effrontery, placed him under arrest on his return to Sweden, the candidature of Bernadotte gradually gained favour in Sweden; and on August 21, 1810, he was elected crown-prince by all four Estates. The most probable explanations of this fairy-tale

election are Sweden's old affection for France, the hope of regaining Finland with Napoleon's assistance, and the universal belief in the statesmanlike and soldierly qualities of the prince of Ponte Corvo. On November 2 Bernadotte made his solemn entry into Stockholm, and on the 5th he received the homage of the Estates, and was adopted by Charles XIII under the name of Charles John.

The new crown-prince was very soon the most popular and the most powerful man in Sweden. The infirmity of the old king, and the dissensions in the council of state, placed the government, and especially the control of foreign affairs, almost entirely in his hands; and he boldly adopted a policy which was directly antagonistic to the wishes and hopes of the old school of Swedish statesmen, but perhaps the best adapted to the circumstances. Finland he at once gave up for lost. He knew that Russia would never voluntarily relinquish the Grand Duchy, while Sweden could not hope to retain it permanently, even if she reconquered it. But the acquisition of Norway might make up for the loss of Finland; and Charles John argued that it might be an easy matter to persuade the anti-Napoleonic powers to punish Denmark for her loyalty to France by wresting Norway from her. Napoleon he rightly distrusted, though at first he was obliged to submit to the emperor's dictation. Thus on November 13, 1810, the Swedish government was forced to declare war against Great Britain, though the British government was privately informed at the same time that Sweden was not a free agent, and that the war would be a mere demonstration. But the pressure of Napoleon became more and more intolerable, culminating in the occupation of Swedish Pomerania by French troops in January, 1812. The Swedish government thereupon concluded a secret convention with Russia (Treaty of Petersburg, April 5, 1812), undertaking to send 30,000 men to operate against Napoleon in Germany, in return for a promise from Alexander guaranteeing to Sweden the possession

of Norway. Too late Napoleon endeavoured to outbid Alexander by offering to Sweden Finland, all Pomerania, and Mecklenburg, in return for Sweden's active cooperation against Russia.

The Örebro Riksdag (April—August, 1812), remarkable besides for its partial repudiation of Sweden's national debt and its reactionary press laws, introduced general conscription into Sweden, and thereby enabled the crown-prince to carry out his ambitious policy. In May, 1812, he mediated a peace between Russia and Turkey, so as to enable Russia to use all her forces against France (Peace of Bucharest); and on July 18, at Örebro, peace was also concluded between Great Britain on one side, and Russia and Sweden on the other. These two treaties were in effect the corner-stones of a fresh coalition against Napoleon, and were confirmed on the outbreak of the Franco-Russian War by a conference between Alexander and Charles John at Åbo, August 30, 1812, when the Tsar undertook to place an army-corps of 35,000 men at the disposal of the Swedish crown-prince, for the conquest of Norway. Annexed to this convention was a secret article, or "family compact," by which each sovereign guaranteed to the other the possession of his territories.

The Treaty of Åbo, and indeed the whole of Charles John's foreign policy in 1812, provoked violent and justifiable criticism among the better class of politicians in Sweden. The immorality of indemnifying Sweden at the expense of a weaker friendly power was obvious; and, while Finland was now definitively sacrificed, Norway had still to be won. Moreover, Great Britain and Russia very properly insisted that Charles John's first duty was to the anti-Napoleonic coalition, the former power vigorously objecting to the expending of her subsidies on the nefarious Norwegian adventure before the common enemy had been crushed. Only on his very ungracious compliance did Great Britain also promise to countenance the union of Sweden and Norway (Treaty of

Stockholm, March 3, 1813); and on April 23 Russia gave her guarantee to the same effect. After the defeats of Gross-Görschen and Bautzen it was the Swedish crown-prince who put fresh heart into the Allies; and, at the Conference of Trachenberg, he drew up the general plan for the campaign, which began after the expiration of the Truce of Poischwitz. Though undoubtedly sparing his Swedes unduly, to the just displeasure of the Allies, Charles John, as commander-in-chief of the northern army, successfully defended the approaches to Berlin against Oudinot in August and against Ney in September; but after Leipsic he went his own way, determined at all hazards to cripple Denmark and secure Norway.

The Norwegians, however, objected to a forced union with a hostile neighbour of a different language and social complexion. Their pride and their patriotism naturally revolted at the prospect of being transferred from one potentate to another like a mere province; and they insisted that, if their lawful monarch, King Frederick, had released them from their allegiance, they had an inalienable right to dispose of their own destinies. The proclamation issued by the Swedish crown-prince, promising them a constitution and the privilege of self-taxation, was therefore ignored; and, when their popular stadholder, the Danish Prince Christian Frederick, urged them to rise in defence of their independence, they responded as one man. On April 10, 1814, representatives of the nation met at Eidsvold iron-works, a few miles north of Christiania. In this assembly, 82 out of 112 members were against union with Sweden; a very liberal constitution, on the basis of the French constitution of 1791, was drawn up; and on May 17 Christian Frederick was elected king of Norway. But Charles John was not the man to relinquish a crown for which he had already sacrificed all Sweden's German possessions; and, as the Norwegians rejected the mediation of the great powers and mobilised their army, he invaded Norway forthwith. The brief struggle was never for a moment doubtful; and, after a

campaign of a few weeks, the convention of Moss, August 14, 1814, provided for the suspension of hostilities and the summoning of a national assembly or Storthing, Charles John engaging to recognise the Eidsvold constitution, with such modifications as the union of the two kingdoms rendered necessary.

At the Storthing assembled at Christiania on October 7, Christian Frederick abdicated; and negotiations were entered into with Sweden for a constitutional union. On October 20 the Storthing, convinced of the futility of further resistance, voted the union by seventy-two votes against five. The Eidsvold constitution was then revised, point by point. Fifty of its 110 paragraphs were retained unaltered; the rest were amended or omitted. On November 4 the new constitution was completed. Norway was declared to be a free and independent kingdom, united to Sweden under a common king, the crown being hereditary in Prince Charles John and his descendants. The executive authority was invested in the king, assisted by a responsible council of state. The king was empowered to appoint a viceroy or stadholder, was recognised as commander-in-chief of the army and navy, which were not to be employed abroad without the consent of the Storthing, and was, in conjunction with the Swedish and Norwegian councils of state, to be the intermediary with foreign powers. The nation was to be represented in the Storthing, a one-chamber Parliament elected triennially and assembling every year at Christiania. One-fourth of its members, on the opening of each session, were to form by election an Upper House or *Lagting*, the remaining three-fourths constituting the Lower House or *Odelsting*; but the division was only to take place when the Storthing resolved itself into a legislative or revisional assembly, and neither of the two *things* was to veto the other. The Storthing alone had the right to levy taxes. The legislative authority was to be exercised by the king and the Storthing conjointly, but the king (excepting

in the case of a proposed modification of the fundamental law, when the veto was to be absolute) was to have only a suspensive veto; and a resolution adopted by three regular Storthings in succession was to become law independently of the royal sanction. Unfortunately the distinction between the cases when the royal veto was to be suspensive and when absolute was so loosely drawn as to leave room for serious differences of opinion between the crown and the legislature.

CHAPTER XV.

DENMARK, 1721-1814.

THE last ten years of the reign of Frederick IV were devoted to the nursing and development of the resources of the country, which had suffered only less severely than Sweden from the effects of the great Northern War. The court, seriously pious, did much for education. No fewer than 240 national schools were built during the period; missionaries were despatched to Finmark and the East Indies; and Hans Egede, the apostle of Greenland, was effectually supported. A wise economy also contributed to reduce the national debt within manageable limits, despite the immense damage done by the great fire of Copenhagen in 1728, which reduced two-thirds of the capital to ashes. In the welfare of the peasantry Frederick IV took a deep interest. In 1722 serfdom was abolished in the case of all peasants born after his accession; but the effect of this humane and highly popular reform was considerably impaired by the simultaneous issue of a militia ordinance, to enable landed proprietors to provide the necessary army recruits from among their tenants.

The first act of Frederick's successor, Christian VI (1730-1746), was to abolish this national militia as being "an intolerable burden"; yet the more pressing agrarian difficulties were not thereby surmounted as had been anticipated. The price of corn continued to fall; the migration of the peasantry

assumed alarming proportions; and at last, "to preserve the land," as well as increase the defensive capacity of the country, the national militia was reestablished by the decree of February 4, 1733, which at the same time bound to the soil all peasants between the ages of nine and forty. Reactionary as this measure was, it enabled the agricultural interest, on which the prosperity of Denmark mainly depended, to tide over one of the most dangerous crises in its history; but certainly the position of the Danish peasantry was never worse than during the reign of the religious and benevolent Christian VI. On the other hand, no other Danish king had such a regard for the intellectual and spiritual welfare of his subjects. The University, which had perished in the conflagration of 1728, was rebuilt on a far more imposing scale in 1732; and its new and more liberal charter was a great improvement on the old one. The other learned schools were reformed by the ordinance of April 17, 1739; and the long-neglected Danish language recovered its rights and was henceforth diligently cultivated. But the king was bent upon making his subjects good Christians, even more than good citizens. At the same time we find an almost unexampled tolerance prevailing (by which the Calvinists chiefly benefited), due to the intervention of the king during the violent but stimulating polemics between the ultra-orthodox Danish hierarchy and German pietism, which had now penetrated into Denmark and won a footing at court. Good as he was, Christian VI himself did not go the way to become personally popular. The shy, sickly, and mildly-melancholy monarch, with his pious invalided consort, Queen Sophia Magdalena, lived the life of an industrious recluse in his many splendid palaces, rarely showing himself to his people, whom he kept at a distance by placing chained posts and vigilant guards before his doors.

Under the peaceful reign of his son and successor, Frederick V (1746-66), still more was done for commerce, industry, and agriculture. To promote Denmark's carrying trade, treaties

were made with the Barbary States, Genoa, and Naples ; and the East Indian Trading Company flourished so exceedingly that it was able to erect a costly equestrian statue of the king in front of the Amalienborg palace. Manufactories and industries were materially assisted by loans, subsidies, and monopolies, and a rigorous protective system which included no fewer than 150 different kinds of wares. On the other hand the condition of the peasantry was even worse under Frederick V than it had been under Christian VI, the *Stavnsbaand*, or regulation, which bound all males to the soil, being made operative from the age of four. Yet signs of a coming amelioration were not wanting. The theory of the physiocrats, that trade and industry could take care of themselves, but that agriculture must be helped in every possible way, now found powerful advocates in Denmark ; and after 1755, when the press censorship was abolished so far as regarded political economy and agriculture, a thorough discussion of the whole agrarian question became possible. A commission, appointed in 1757, worked zealously for the repeal of many agricultural abuses ; and several great landed proprietors, notably A. G. Moltke and J. H. E. Bernstorff, introduced hereditary leaseholds and abolished the servile tenure. Social questions were also freely discussed. Immediately after his accession Frederick V had publicly declared that he would not allow the intellectual life of his subjects to be in any way restricted ; and the Academy of Sorö, reestablished by Christian VI and richly endowed by Holberg, became the centre of the new liberalism.

Foreign affairs were left in the capable hands of Count J. H. E. Bernstorff, who aimed at restoring Denmark to her former rank of a great power, and had a watchful eye for the dangers likely to arise from the aggrandisement of Prussia and Russia. Only once during the reign of Frederick V was peace imperilled. On the death of the Russian empress Elizabeth, 1762, her nephew Peter, who was also duke of Holstein-Gottorp, succeeded her ; and the keynote of his

whole policy was hostility to Denmark. Even his idol, Frederick the Great, could not restrain him; and no sooner had he disengaged Russia from the complications of the Seven Years' War than he directed all his forces against the secular enemy of his Holstein duchy. Denmark, although deserted by all her allies, resolutely sent a fine fleet of thirty-six men-of-war into the Baltic, far superior to anything the Russians could oppose to it, and at the same time despatched 40,000 men to Mecklenburg to prevent the invasion of Holstein. The Danish and Moscovite armies came within striking distance, when the revolution at St Petersburg, which placed Catharine II on the throne, changed the whole situation. The Russian advance was stayed; and ultimately, by the compact of 1773, the house of Gottorp, represented by the grand-duke Paul, agreed to the incorporation of Sleswick with Denmark, and ceded its portion of Holstein in exchange for Oldenburg and Dellenhorst.

The first four absolute kings of Denmark had laboured for the welfare of their people according to their lights; and, if none of them had been great men, all of them had at least been good rulers. Christian VII, who succeeded his father in 1766, had neither the wish nor the capacity to rule. He was kind-hearted and not without natural wit, but, shamefully neglected in his childhood, he had grown up beneath the tyranny of a brutal and ignorant governor, amidst the vilest environment, a timid, capricious, and hopelessly debauched semi-imbecile. That his motives were respectable is evident from his efforts on behalf of the down-trodden peasantry, whom he meant entirely to emancipate, beginning by abolishing serfdom among all the crown-tenants in the county of Copenhagen. But before very long symptoms of madness, though never officially recognised, were observable in the unfortunate prince; and shortly after his return from a foreign tour in 1768, during which, strange to say, he impressed society both in Paris and London most favourably, he was clearly incapable of governing.

Christian had been accompanied on this tour by a young German doctor, Johan Frederick Struensee, who had connexions at court, and had been warmly recommended to him. Struensee was born at Halle in 1731. His father, subsequently superintendent-general of Sleswick-Holstein, was a rigid pietist; but young Struensee, who settled down in the sixties as a doctor at Altona, where his superior intelligence and elegant manners soon made him fashionable, revolted against the narrowness of his father's creed, became a fanatical propagandist of the atheism of the *Encyclopædia*, and, while preaching the new gospel of social reform and enlightenment, scandalised his contemporaries by the frank licentiousness of his private life. But he was a clever doctor, and, having somewhat restored the king's health and gained his affection, was retained as court-physician and accompanied Christian VII back to Copenhagen, contrary to the advice of the sagacious Bernstorff, who took the right measure of the shallow, unprincipled adventurer. It had always been Struensee's ambition to play a great part in the world and realise his dreams of reform. From the banished Count Rantzau-Ascheberg and other Danish friends of dubious character he had gathered that the crazy, old-fashioned Dano-Norwegian state, misruled by an idiot, was the fittest subject in the world for the experiments of a man of superior ingenuity like himself; and he proceeded to worm his way to power with considerable astuteness.

First he reconciled the king and queen, for he calculated, shrewdly enough, that if the king was to be his tool the queen must needs be his friend. Nor was it long before the queen became much more than his friend. At first Caroline Matilda had disliked Struensee, whose reputation was flagrantly bad, but she was speedily captivated by his indisputable superiority. The unfortunate girl (she was scarce eighteen), who two years before had, for purely political reasons, been mated with a crapulous lunatic, to live with whom on any terms of intimacy was inevitable degradation, could not fail to be deeply impressed by

the interesting and highly gifted young doctor, whose tact and consideration speedily and completely won her susceptible heart; and though, as a matter of fact, Struensee remained cold, he was nevertheless libertine enough to debauch the queen in order to promote his own interests. By January of 1770 he was notoriously her lover; a successful vaccination of the baby crown-prince against small-pox, in May, still further increased his influence; and when, in the course of the year, the king sank into a condition of mental torpor, Struensee's authority became paramount. Bernstorff now alone stood in his way, and Bernstorff was got rid of by a royal letter of September 15, 1770. Previously to this, Bernstorff's enemy and Struensee's friend, the exiled disreputable Count Rantzau-Ascheberg, was recalled to court; and with him came another Altona acquaintance of Struensee's, Enevold Brandt, who had also been living abroad under a cloud, but now came back to help the aspiring doctor to look after the imbecile king.

If ever there was an opportunity for constructive statesmanship in Denmark-Norway, it was in the autumn of 1770. Domestic affairs were in anything but a satisfactory state. The national debt still stood at seventeen millions. In order to reduce it, crown property had to be sold on an enormous scale; and the pressure of taxation was already so severe that one leading statesman declared that air and water were now the only articles which remained untaxed. Moreover the evil effects of over-protection were beginning to be felt. Many industrial sources of revenue were drying up; the prices of most of the necessaries of life were steadily rising, woollen, cotton and silk goods in particular being almost unobtainable; and an uneasy feeling prevailed that the fifty years' peace which the Danish state had enjoyed since the great Northern War had been unattended by the prosperity which might very reasonably have been expected. But, if the situation was difficult, the general discontent excited by the old order of things, and the general desire for reform in nearly every direc-

tion, were encouraging symptoms which might have been made the stepping-stones to a new and better system of government.

This did not escape the quick eye of Struensee; and he chose the moment when he overthrew Bernstorff to introduce an obviously useful reform by abolishing the press censorship (September 14, 1770) as a preliminary measure. His friend Rantzau-Ascheberg about the same time took his seat in the Council of State; but for the present Struensee himself kept discreetly in the background, though from henceforth he was the wire-puller of the whole political machine. But he soon grew impatient with his puppets. In December the Council of State was abolished; and Struensee, who hitherto had held the modest post of Royal lector, appointed himself "Maître des requêtes." It was now his official duty to present to the king all the reports from the various departments of state; and, Christian VII being scarcely responsible for his actions, Struensee naturally dictated to him whatever answers he pleased. His next proceeding was to make a clean sweep of all the heads of departments and to abolish the Norwegian stadholdership. Henceforth the Cabinet, with himself as its motive power, was to be the one supreme authority in the State. Yet there was one exception. However high an opinion Struensee had of his own capacity, he could not but recognise that his ignorance of diplomatic routine and international affairs disqualified him from controlling the Danish foreign office, so he entrusted that department to Count Osten. It was perhaps the most prudent thing he ever did, but he thereby incurred the undying animosity of his former protector Count Rantzau-Ascheberg, who had, *in petto*, reserved that lucrative post for himself.

Having thus concentrated all power in his own hands, Struensee could devote himself entirely to the work of reform. The ambition of inscribing his name among the most illustrious representatives of the new era of enlightenment weighed much with him, but there also can be no doubt that he really meant

to do good. He felt that it was his mission to regenerate the benighted Danish and Norwegian nations, but unfortunately he had made up his mind to regenerate them in his own way, on purely abstract principles, without the slightest regard for native customs and predilections, which in his eyes were of course mere prejudices. As, moreover, he knew not a word of Danish, he could not but be ignorant in many important respects of the real wants and the actual condition of the two kingdoms he had taken in hand. It must not be supposed that the Struensee reform was an isolated phenomenon in Danish history, sharply contrasting with what immediately preceded and succeeded it. The Pietism of the earlier part was in some respects the forerunner of the philanthropy of the latter part of the eighteenth century; and humane principles had already filtered through the whole social and political fabric of Denmark. When, therefore, Struensee appointed a commission to lighten the burdens and promote the benefit of the peasantry, when he established foundling hospitals, when he abolished capital punishment for theft and the employment of judicial torture, he was only following in the footsteps of his predecessors, although his mode of proceeding was more energetic and thoroughgoing than theirs had been. The same remark applies to his praiseworthy endeavours to raise the efficiency and dignity of the public service by doing away with such demoralising abuses as perquisites, "lackeyism," or the appointment of great men's domestics to lucrative public posts, and the like.

In all these necessary and beneficial reforms there was nothing revolutionary. Unfortunately reform was not so much a principle as a hobby, a mania, with Struensee. On one occasion he casually observed that the whole State was so full of faults that he would not leave one stone of it upon another. And he was as good as his word. The mere fact that a venerable institution still existed was a sufficient reason, in his eyes, for doing away with it. Changes which a prudent and careful minister might have effected in a decade or a

generation, Struensee pushed through in less than a fortnight or a month. To give some idea of his febrile activity, it may be mentioned that between March 29, 1771, and January 16, 1772—the ten months during which he held absolute sway—he issued no fewer than 1069 revolutionary cabinet orders, or more than three a day. In order to be sure of obedience he dismissed wholesale the staffs of all the public departments, substituting for old and experienced officials nominees of his own, in many cases untried men who knew little or nothing of the country they were supposed to govern. It may be added that most of the abruptly discharged civilians received neither compensation nor retiring pension.

The Dictator's manners were even worse than his methods. He habitually adopted a tone of insulting superiority, all the more irritating as coming from an ill-informed foreigner; and there were occasions when he seemed to go out of his way to shock the most sacred feelings of the most respectable classes of the community. Thus, as if to show his contempt for religion and public worship, Struensee, with revolting cynicism, converted the chapel of the great Frederick Hospital, and the chaplains' apartments adjoining it, into wards for diseases of the most loathsome type, and dismissed the chaplains as unnecessary. Nor was this all. His system of retrenchment, on which he particularly prided himself, was in the last degree immoral and hypocritical, for, while reducing the number of the public officials or clipping down their salaries to starvation point, he squandered thousands upon balls, concerts, and masquerades, and other *agrément*s of the court, and induced the king to present him and his friend Brandt with 60,000 rix-dollars apiece. Other Danish monarchs, it is true, had before now liberally rewarded their faithful ministers, but at least they knew what they were about. There is something peculiarly revolting in the spectacle of Struensee misusing his power over the imbecile king in order to put money into his own pocket.

Still, in spite of all his blunders and brutalities, it is pretty evident that for a short time at least middle-class public opinion was, on the whole, favourable to the new minister, or, at least, disposed to give him a chance. Hatred of the aristocracy was still a living force in Denmark, and the liberated Danish press acclaimed the reforms, especially the agrarian reforms, of Struensee. Had he been wise and modest enough to cultivate this germinating popularity, he might perhaps have been able to defy any combination of the dispossessed bureaucrats and the discontented landed proprietors. But Struensee's contempt for the Danish people was almost incredible. He cared not a jot whether they approved or disapproved of his reforms, and as to making any effort to master their language, he regarded the very idea of such a thing as the height of absurdity. From first to last he was content to be regarded as a sort of saturnine providence, dispensing ordinances from a remote and awful distance. He was never visible except in the royal box at the theatre, or when he was out riding with the king and queen. But what most incensed the people against him was the way in which he put the king completely on one side; and this feeling was all the stronger as, outside a very narrow court circle, nobody seems to have had any idea that Christian VII (who was carefully exhibited to the public during his very few and ever rarer lucid intervals) was really mad at all. The opinion prevailed that his will had been weakened, if not crushed, by habitual ill-usage; and this opinion was confirmed by the publication of the cabinet order of July 14, 1771, appointing Struensee "Gehejme Kabinetsminister," with authority to issue cabinet orders which were to have the force of royal ordinances, even if unprovided with the royal sign-manual.

Nor were Struensee's scandalous relations with the queen less offensive to a nation which had a traditional veneration for the royal house of Oldenburg, while Caroline Matilda's peculiarly shameless and unfeminine conduct in public brought

the kingdom into contempt. The society which daily gathered round the king and queen, of a sort happily not often seen even at the worst courts, excited the derision of the foreign ambassadors. An involuntary eye-witness has remarked, "We had a sort of resemblance to servants in a good house sitting down to table in the absence of the master and mistress." The unhappy king was little more than the butt of his environment, and once, when he threatened his keeper, Brandt, with a flogging for some impertinence, Brandt, encouraged by Struensee and the queen, actually locked Christian VII in his room and beat him with his fists till he begged for mercy. Things were at their worst during the winter of 1771. Struensee, who had in the meantime created himself a count, now gave full rein to his licentiousness and brutality. If, as we are assured, he publicly snubbed the queen, we may readily imagine how he treated common folk. Before long the people had an opportunity of expressing their disgust openly. In the summer of 1771 Caroline Matilda was delivered of a daughter, who was christened Louisa Augusta; and a proclamation commanded that a "Te Deum" in honour of the event should be sung in all the churches; but so universal was the belief that the child was Struensee's that, at the end of the ordinary service, the congregation rose and departed *en masse*, leaving the clergy to sing the "Te Deum" by themselves.

The general ill-will against Struensee and the queen, which, smouldering all through the autumn of 1771, had been greatly encouraged by unmistakeable signs of poltroonery on his part, found expression at last in a secret conspiracy against him, headed by Rantzau-Ascheberg; General Eichstadt, the chief of the dragoon regiment responsible for the safety of the court; the queen-dowager, Juliana Maria; her son Prince Frederick; and the prince's secretary, the theologian and historian, Ove Höegh-Guldberg. Early in the morning of January 17, 1772, Struensee, Brandt, and the queen were arrested in their respective bedrooms; and the "liberation of the king," who was

driven round Copenhagen by his deliverer in a gold carriage, was received with universal rejoicing. The chief charge against Struensee was that he had usurped the royal authority in contravention of the *Kongelov*. He defended himself with considerable ability, and, at first, confident that the prosecution would not dare to lay hands on the queen, he denied that their *liaison* had ever been criminal. But, on hearing that she also was a prisoner of state, his courage evaporated, and he was base enough to betray her. On April 25 both Struensee and Brandt were condemned first to lose their right hands and then to be beheaded; their bodies were afterwards to be drawn and quartered. Sentence of death was the least that Struensee had to expect. He had undoubtedly been guilty of *lèse-majesté* and gross usurpation of the royal authority, both capital offences according to paragraphs 7 and 26 of the *Kongelov*, to say nothing of his debauching the queen. Brandt also had forfeited his head by using personal violence towards the king. The sentences were carried out in all their ghastly details on April 28, Brandt suffering first.

The queen, who had been conveyed to the Kronborg fortress on January 17, was confronted with Struensee's confession on March 9. Hitherto, to save her lover, she had strenuously denied their guilty intimacy, but now she was obliged to admit the truth of what, from the evidence of her own waiting-women, was indeed only too obvious. On April 6 an extraordinary tribunal of thirty-five members pronounced the dissolution of her marriage with the king. It was the original intention of the Danish government to imprison her for life at Aalborghus; but her brother, George III, warmly supported by public opinion in England, which refused to believe in the guilt of the unfortunate young English princess, intervened peremptorily on her behalf, and a British man-of-war conveyed her to her brother's Hanoverian electorate. Only five and a-half years before, at the age of fifteen, she had made her triumphal entry into Copenhagen; now, not

yet twenty-one, her career was already over. She died at Celle on May 10, 1775.

For the next twelve years Ove Höegh-Guldberg practically ruled Denmark. The administration continued to be carried on by means of cabinet orders signed by the idiotic king. It was inevitably a reactionary period, yet, on the whole, beneficial. Struensee's hasty, ill-digested projects of reform had produced something very like chaos, while his cheap cosmopolitanism had contemptuously trampled upon everything national and patriotic. It was Guldberg's mission to rectify matters and repair the damage done. He did his utmost for the Danish language and nationality; even in the army, largely composed of Germans, the German word of command was abolished; and by the ordinance of 1776 all government offices and appointments were reserved for Danish-born subjects. Most of Struensee's fledglings were naturally dismissed; and a far greater man than Struensee, Andreas Bernstorff, the nephew of J. H. E. Bernstorff, as minister of foreign affairs, gave strength and dignity to the new administration. Still, the tendency of "this government of old women and young parsons," as Gustavus III unkindly called it, was undeniably ultra-conservative. The liberty of the press was considerably restricted though the censorship was not actually reintroduced; and, as to the agrarian question, Guldberg frankly declared that "the yoke of the peasantry cannot be cast off without shaking the State to its very foundations." Still, on the whole, the Guldberg period was decidedly prosperous. The commerce of Denmark during the American War of Independence increased considerably; and the Mediterranean carrying trade fell almost entirely into her hands while Great Britain was at war with nearly all the other maritime powers. The impediments laid in the way of the neutral states by England and the other belligerents induced Denmark in 1780 to accede to the so-called Armed Neutrality of the North (the work of the Russian vice-chancellor, Nikita Panin), for the maintenance of the prin-

ciple, "a free ship makes the cargo free," the main contentions of which were at last virtually recognised by Great Britain, France, and Spain. In the same year Bernstorff, who had incurred the resentment of Russia by negotiating separately with Great Britain, was compelled to retire; but in 1784 he was recalled by the crown-prince Frederick, whose first act on taking his seat in the Council of State, at the age of sixteen, on April 4, was to dismiss the Guldberg ministry.

A fresh and fruitful period of reform now began, lasting till nearly the end of the century, and only interrupted by the brief but costly war with Sweden in 1788 (pp. 374-5). The emancipation of the peasantry was now the burning question of the day, and the whole matter was thoroughly ventilated. Bernstorff and the crown-prince were the most zealous advocates of the peasantry in the Council of State; but the honour of bringing the whole peasant question within the range of practical politics undoubtedly belongs to H. D. Reventlow, in whom emancipation found a most courageous and persevering advocate. In August, 1786, he induced the crown-prince to appoint a commission "fully to determine the respective rights of the proprietors and the peasants, for the common benefit of themselves and the State." A vigorous polemic ensued. The conservatives warmly protested, and not altogether from interested motives; but the government was not to be deterred by their objections. The ordinance of June 8, 1787, decreed that in future all leaseholds should give the farmer full possession, and that no tenant should be expelled except after legal process. At the same time all the old barbarous punishments, which the squires were authorised to inflict at will upon their tenants, were abolished. The ordinance of June 20, 1788, went still further by abolishing the *Stavnsbaand*, or custom of binding the peasantry absolutely to their birthplace, and the *Udskrivningsret* of the proprietors, which enabled them to force holdings on their tenants.

Nor was the reforming principle limited to the abolition of

serfdom. In 1788 the corn trade was declared free; the Jews received civil rights; and the negro slave trade was forbidden. In 1796 a special ordinance reformed the whole system of judicial procedure, making it cheaper and more expeditious; while the toll-ordinance of February 1, 1797, still further extended the principle of free trade. Moreover, until two years after Bernstorff's death in 1797, the Danish press enjoyed a larger freedom of speech than the press of any other absolute monarchy in Europe, so much so that at last Denmark became suspected of favouring Jacobin views. It is also undeniable that, after the outbreak of the French Revolution, public discussion in Denmark assumed a new character, practical questions being more and more neglected, while the existing constitution and the state religion were freely, not to say offensively, criticised. Finally, in September, 1799, under strong pressure from the Russian emperor Paul, who also demanded Denmark's accession to the second coalition against France, and provisionally closed all Russian ports against Danish vessels, the Danish government forbade anonymity, and introduced a limited censorship, which effectually prevented public political discussion.

Denmark's obsequiousness to Russia went further still. To avoid a conflict with Great Britain, Bernstorff had always insisted that Denmark ought not to allow her trading ships to be convoyed; but the new government was persuaded by the Tsar to join a second Armed Neutrality League (1800) which Russia had just concluded with Prussia and Sweden. Great Britain retaliated by laying an embargo on the vessels of the three neutral powers, and by sending a considerable fleet to the Baltic under the command of Parker and Nelson. Surprised and unprepared though they were, the Danes, nevertheless, on April 2, 1801, offered a gallant resistance; but their fleet was destroyed, their capital bombarded, and, abandoned by Russia, they were compelled to submit to a disadvantageous peace.

Nevertheless "the brilliant commercial period," as Danish

historians call the generation which elapsed between the outbreak of the North American War of Independence and the catastrophe of 1807, still continued ; and Denmark got her fair share of the great advantages which the war gave to neutral powers. But after the Peace of Tilsit there could be no further question of neutrality. Napoleon had determined that, if Great Britain refused to accept Russia's mediation, Denmark, Sweden, and Portugal were to be forced to close their harbours to her ships and declare war against her. It was the intention of the Danish government to preserve its neutrality to the last, although, on the whole, it preferred an alliance with Great Britain to a league with Napoleon, and was even prepared for a breach with the French emperor if he pressed her too hardly. The army had therefore been assembled in Holstein, and the crown prince-regent was with it. But the British government did not consider Denmark strong enough to resist France ; and, besides that, the Danish government was very unpopular in England because of its claims in respect of Danish and Norwegian vessels seized by the British cruisers. The British government accordingly sent a fleet, with 30,000 men on board, to the Sound to compel Denmark, by way of security for her future conduct, to unite her fleet with the British fleet. Denmark was offered an alliance, the complete restitution of her fleet after the war, a guarantee of all her possessions, compensation for all expenses, and even territorial aggrandisement.

Dictatorially presented as they were, these terms were liberal and even generous ; and it cannot be doubted that, if a great statesman like Bernstorff had been at the head of affairs in Copenhagen, he would have accepted them, even if with a wry face. But the prince-regent, if a good patriot, was a poor politician, and invincibly obstinate. When therefore in August, 1807, the British fleet under Gambier arrived in the Sound, and an extraordinary British plenipotentiary hastened to Kiel to place the British demands before the crown-prince, Frederick

not only refused to negotiate but ordered the Copenhagen authorities to put the city in the best state of defence possible. Taking this to be tantamount to a declaration of war, on August 16 the British army landed at Vedback; and shortly afterwards the Danish capital was invested. Anything like an adequate defence was hopeless from the first, and a few bold sorties produced not the slightest effect; but, Copenhagen still refusing to surrender, a bombardment began which lasted from September 2 till September 5, and ended with the capitulation of the city and the surrender of the fleet intact, the prince-regent having neglected to give orders for its destruction.

After the abduction of the fleet, Great Britain offered Denmark the choice between an alliance, neutrality, or war. In the first case the British government's former promises were to hold good; but, if Denmark insisted upon war, it threatened to wrest Norway from her. Overbearing to brutality as this treatment undeniably was, the more clear-sighted of the Danes recognised the hopelessness of a struggle with Great Britain; but the prince-regent regarded only one course as open to a man of honour. He rejected every attempt at negotiation, and, on November 4, declared war against Great Britain. This brought upon Denmark a few months later a war with Sweden also; but the Danish government hoped, with the help of a French army-corps of 24,000, under Bernadotte, to compensate itself for the loss of the fleet by conquering Scania. But the projected Scanian invasion came to nothing, as the British, having complete command of the sea, easily prevented the transport of troops, while the Spanish contingent in Bernadotte's army rebelled against its officers, and was shipped to England on British men-of-war. Denmark was therefore driven to conclude peace with Sweden in 1809 by the Treaty of Jönköping.

The war with Great Britain continued; and its immediate result was the ruin of the flourishing Danish carrying trade. Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities no fewer than 600 Danish ships were seized, and as many again were lost during

the ensuing year. But the patriotism and public spirit of the Danes were now thoroughly aroused; and private persons energetically assisted the government to create a new fleet. To construct men-of-war was out of the question, but many gun-boats and other small war-vessels were quickly built; and these, in conjunction with innumerable privateers, did excellent service, and captured British merchantmen literally by thousands, the prizes seized between 1810 and 1812 bringing in no less than £3,500,000. Nor was this all. In 1811 Denmark joined the Continental System, under which no ship coming from or touching at a British port was allowed to enter any Danish harbour, while the importation of any goods of British origin was strictly prohibited. Naturally it was only with a supreme effort that the country could sustain such a ruinous and exhausting war; and, while it lasted, the note circulation of Denmark fell (in 1812) to one-fourteenth of its face value. Moreover, in the duchies the French alliance, for commercial reasons, was highly unpopular, as Napoleon's prohibition of imports made the lucrative trade with Germany well-nigh impossible, and landed property in Sleswick-Holstein fell 75 per cent. in value. A feeling arose in the duchies that they were being sacrificed to the interests of the Danish crown; and separatist tendencies were evoked, exhibiting themselves in indifference as to the fate of Norway and satisfaction at the victories of the Allies.

On the deposition of Gustavus IV in 1809 (p. 389) there had been some talk of electing as his successor Frederick VI (the prince-regent had become king of Denmark on the death of Christian VII on March 10, 1808); but, as Frederick could only promise Sweden a constitution, while refusing that privilege to Norway, the more liberal-minded Prince Christian Augustus of Augustenburg was elected successor to the Swedish throne in his stead. On the sudden death of the prince in 1810, Frederick VI's election was again taken into consideration, and a reunion of the three northern kingdoms

seemed possible; but at the last moment Frederick again proved to be impracticable, and Bernadotte was chosen crown-prince of Sweden. He made it his first object to endeavour to win Norway, and, as Napoleon refused to help him, he concluded an alliance with Russia, who promised her cooperation, Great Britain and Prussia ultimately acceding to the proposal of separating Norway from Denmark (see chap. xiv).

The obstinate adhesion of Frederick VI to the French alliance was largely responsible for this disruption project. Even so late as February, 1813, when he made pacific overtures to Great Britain, the negotiations stranded on his refusal to surrender Norway even in exchange for ample compensation elsewhere. He was therefore obliged to cling still closer to France, though Napoleon's despotic friendship had been almost as injurious as British hostility to Denmark's trade; and Denmark was consequently involved in the French emperor's collapse. After the Battle of Leipsic, Bernadotte, now Prince Charles John of Sweden, invaded Holstein; and, though the Danish army gallantly held its own at Sehested, and the military resources of the country were considerable, Frederick VI lost heart and accepted the conditions of the Allies. By the Peace of Kiel, January 14, 1814, he surrendered Norway to the king of Sweden, receiving, by way of compensation, a sum of money and Swedish Pomerania with Rügen, which were subsequently to be transferred to Prussia.

CHAPTER XVI.

DENMARK SINCE 1814.

THE position of Denmark in 1814 was one of great difficulty. By the loss of Norway the population of the monarchy had been reduced one-third; and the compensation offered by the Peace of Kiel proved illusory. Trade was ruined, the capital impoverished, the exchequer empty. Loyalty to the Napoleonic alliance had isolated the little kingdom; the government's abrupt change of policy at the conclusion of peace made it highly unpopular; and recent events in Norway had embittered nearly every European power against the king. Not till Denmark had unreservedly acceded to the new coalition against Napoleon, after his return from Elba, did a better feeling abroad begin to prevail. The last Russian troops evacuated Holstein at the beginning of 1815; Great Britain, Austria, and Prussia then enforced the cession of Swedish Pomerania to Denmark; and Denmark, as previously arranged, surrendered Swedish Pomerania and Rügen to Prussia in exchange for the duchy of Lauenburg and two million rix-dollars. An agreement was also arrived at (1819) between Denmark and Norway, whereby the latter kingdom's quota of its old national debt was fixed at three million rix-dollars.

On the establishment of the German Bund (June 18, 1815) Frederick VI acceded thereto as duke of Holstein and Lauenburg, but refused to allow Sleswick to enter the Bund, on the ground that it was an essential part of the Danish realm. The sixteen years between the Peace of Kiel and 1830 were almost absolutely free from political agitation. Even Dr Jacob Dampe's

isolated and severely punished advocacy of an utterly impracticable free constitution, in 1820, excited but a languid interest, while the German Bund looked coldly on similar constitutional efforts on the part of Holstein and Sleswick. Economically the period 1814–1830 was a gloomy one. The relinquishment of Norway necessitated considerable reductions of expenditure; but the economies actually practised fell far short of the requirements of the diminished kingdom and its depleted exchequer; while the agricultural depression induced by the enormous fall in the price of corn and other cereals all over Europe caused fresh demands to be made upon the State, and added ten million rix-dollars to the national debt before 1835. An improvement began, however, in 1820, and continued steadily through the thirties.

The last ten years of Frederick VI's reign were also remarkable for the revival of political life. This was especially the case in the duchies, in consequence of the French Revolution of 1830. The principal spokesman for these new liberal ideas was the Frisian, Uwe Jens Lornsen, who advocated the complete administrative separation of Sleswick-Holstein from Denmark, while retaining a common sovereign. The movement was suppressed by the imprisonment of Lornsen (Nov. 1830). But the Danish government itself now felt the necessity of doing something; and, by the ordinance of May 28, 1831, confirmed by the ordinance of May 15, 1834, provincial consultative assemblies were established for Jutland, the Islands, Sleswick, and Holstein. These assemblies were to be elected for six years, and to meet biennially. They were to choose their own presidents; and summaries of their proceedings were to be printed in the official gazette. All Bills relating to taxation and property were to be submitted to them, and they were to have a voice in fiscal matters generally. The first elections were held in 1834–5; and from eighty-three to eighty-seven per cent. of the landed proprietors, to whom the suffrage was limited, took part in them.

On December 3, 1839, Frederick VI died in his 72nd year. In spite of his amiability and his earnest regard for the personal happiness of his people, the more enlightened Danes naturally regarded a monarch who firmly believed in the divine right of kings as a serious drag upon the free political development of the nation; but they built high hopes upon his successor, Christian VIII (1839–1848), a highly educated, intellectual man, who, during his regency in Norway, a generation earlier, had been famous for his enlightened views. But the former "giver of constitutions" disappointed his admirers by his steady rejection of every liberal project. Administrative reform "was the only reform he would promise." Nevertheless the agitation for a free constitution both in Denmark and the duchies continued to grow in strength in spite of press persecutions and other repressive measures. The rising national feeling in Germany also stimulated the separatist tendencies of the duchies; and "Sleswick-Holsteinism," as it now began to be called, evoked in Denmark the counter-movement known as *Ejder-* or *Ejderdansk-politik*, i.e. the policy of extending Denmark to the Eyder, and obliterating German Sleswick, in order to save Danish Sleswick from being absorbed by Germany. This would also have involved the separation of Sleswick and Holstein, which had been united from time immemorial.

During the following years "Sleswick-Holsteinism" and "Eyderdanism" faced each other as rival, mutually exacerbating forces. In the ducal Diets an overwhelming majority openly advocated the three so-called Sleswick-Holstein fundamental postulates: (1) the duchies are independent states; (2) the duchies are united states; (3) the duchies are subject to the Salic Law. So hostile, indeed, to the Danish nationality was the majority in the Sleswick Diet, that, in November, 1842, Peter Lorenzen, the leader of the Danish ministry, was excluded from the house for attempting to address the assembly in his mother-tongue. The king sympathised neither with "Sleswick-Holsteinism" nor with "Eyderdanism."

A single indivisible state, as nearly as possible in its existing form, was what he preferred; but the strong patriotic feeling in Denmark, supported as it was by the Liberals, compelled him at last to intervene. On July 8, 1846, he issued a circular declaring that the order of succession as regarded Denmark, Sleswick, and Lauenburg was identical; but he reserved his decision in the more doubtful case of Holstein. At the same time he stated explicitly that he had no intention of interfering with the independence of Sleswick or with its union with Holstein. As might have been expected, this circular caused great satisfaction in the kingdom and extraordinary bitterness in the duchies, where both the Diets protested against it. Thus the issue of the circular brought the king into collision with the Sleswick-Holstein party, and simultaneously drew him towards the Danish national-liberals. In the last years of his reign he was occupied with the plan of a common constitution for the whole monarchy, as the best means of holding it together; but he died on January 20, 1848, before any definite conclusion had been come to.

The new king, Frederick VII (1848-1863), had little knowledge of state affairs, and lacked both moral and intellectual stability, but his natural parts were good; as crown-prince he had mixed freely with the lower classes, and his *bonhomie* and accessibility made him very popular. A week after his accession, January 28, 1848, he promulgated the liberal constitution which had been drafted by his father, whereby the kingdom and the duchies were provided with a joint parliament. The project pleased neither the Danes nor the Sleswick-Holsteiners. The former, not unreasonably, protested against 800,000 Sleswick-Holsteiners being placed on terms of political equality with 1,300,000 Danes; whilst the duchies refused to be merged in the Danish monarchy, and petitioned the king for a united Sleswick-Holstein Diet, and Sleswick's incorporation in the German Bund. These demands led to a counter-agitation of the Eyderdansk party at Copenhagen, which

culminated in the famous procession of 10,000 citizens to the palace of Christiansborg (March 21), and the presentation of a monster petition to the king. Yielding to necessity, Frederick assured the deputation that he would ever be the faithful leader of the Danish people in the path of liberty and honour; and on the following day an Eyderdansk ministry was formed under the presidency of Count A. V. Moltke. Immediately afterwards the Sleswick-Holstein deputies were, in their turn, received in audience, and informed that Sleswick could not be incorporated with the German Bund; and that, while its liberties should be guaranteed by the possession of its own provincial assembly or Landtag, "its indissoluble union with Denmark must be cemented by a common free constitution." Holstein, on the other hand, as an independent "Forbundstaat," should have a separate free constitution.

Meanwhile open rebellion had broken out in Holstein on March 23. A provisional government was formed for the purpose of securing the rights of Sleswick-Holstein, and the next day the rebels surprised the fortress of Rendsborg; but their further advance was checked by the Danish victories at Bov and Flensburg on April 9. Prussia now intervened. The duke of Augustenburg had hastened to Berlin to win the support of Frederick William IV; and that monarch gladly seized the opportunity of regaining his own lost prestige by placing himself at the head of the popular Sleswick-Holstein movement. The Bundestag at Frankfort followed Prussia's lead; and the result was an invasion of Sleswick by Prussian and North German troops, who, after the battle of Sleswick, April 23, occupied the whole duchy except Dybböl and Als. Denmark now appealed to the guarantors of the union with Sleswick. Great Britain and Russia, fearing that the acquisition of the Sleswick-Holstein duchies might lead to the establishment of a strong German sea-power, intervened diplomatically on her behalf; while Sweden-Norway sent an

army-corps to Fünen, which was not, however, to engage in hostilities unless the Danish crown-lands were attacked. In May a Russian note brought about the evacuation of Jutland by the German troops; and in August, at Malmö, Great Britain and Sweden mediated an armistice between Denmark and Prussia, under the terms of which the duchies were to be evacuated by both the German and Danish troops, and ruled *ad interim* by Sleswick-Holstein commissioners.

This provisional government weighed so heavily upon the Danish population, that in February, 1849, Denmark denounced the armistice, successfully invaded the duchies, and thereby forced Prussia, by the subsequent Peace of Berlin (July 2, 1850), practically to abandon the duchies to their own resources. Denmark was thus left free to deal with the matter in her own way. In the spring of 1849 the provisional government had been superseded by a Holstein stadholdership, which endeavoured, after the peace, to extend its sway over Sleswick; and, as a first step in that direction, the Sleswick-Holstein army, reorganised by Prussian officers and largely reinforced by German volunteers, invaded South Sleswick, but was routed at Isted and driven back. Holstein was recovered with the aid of Austria, who regarded the Sleswick-Holstein movement unfavourably and demanded through the Bund, where she now predominated, the withdrawal of the Holstein stadholdership and the dissolution of the Holstein army. The duchies yielded to force; and on February 1, 1851, the government of Holstein was provisionally taken over by three commissioners, Prussian, Austrian, and Danish respectively.

Denmark, meanwhile, had been engaged in providing herself with a parliament on modern lines. The constitutional rescript of January 28, 1848, had been withdrawn in favour of an electoral law for a national assembly, of whose 152 members thirty-eight were to be nominated by the king and to form an Upper Chamber (*Landsting*), while the remainder were to be elected by the people and to form a popular chamber

(*Folketing*). The so-called *Bondevenlige*, or philo-peasant party, which objected to the king's right of nomination and preferred a one-chamber system, now separated from the Centre or National Liberals on this very point. But the National Liberals triumphed at the general election ; fear of reactionary tendencies finally induced the Radicals to accede to the wishes of the majority ; and on June 5, 1849, the new constitution received the royal sanction.

At this stage Denmark's foreign relations prejudicially affected her domestic politics. The Liberal *Eyderdansk* party was inclined to divide Sleswick into three distinct administrative districts or belts ; a purely Danish, a purely German, and a mixed district, according as the various nationalities predominated (language rescripts of 1851) ; but German sentiment was opposed to any such settlement, and the great continental powers, especially Russia, whom Denmark could not afford to offend, also looked askance on the Danish constitution as far too democratic. The *Eyderdansk* programme consequently foundered on the opposition of Europe, and a Conservative ministry, under Bluhme, took office (1852), prepared to offer the necessary guarantees in order to arrive at an understanding with the powers. The final agreement with Austria and Prussia was embodied in the new constitutional decree of January 28, 1852, whereby the kingdom, Sleswick, Holstein, and Lauenburg, were each to have local self-government for their separate affairs, besides a common constitution for common affairs ; the political union between Sleswick and Holstein was to cease ; but, on the other hand, Sleswick was not to be incorporated with the kingdom. The common ultra-conservative constitution was to be a matter of arrangement between the Rigsdag and the Landtags of the duchies. In the exchange of notes between Denmark and the German great powers, which preceded the promulgation of the constitution, and together with it formed the so-called "conventions of 1851 and 1852," it was expressly

stipulated that no part of the common monarchy should be subordinated to any other part, and that Sleswick should not be incorporated with Denmark. The above-mentioned constitutional decree of January 28 was accepted by the German great powers and the Bund as a satisfactory basis for the framing of the Danish constitution ; and Holstein was thereupon restored to Denmark.

Austria and Prussia were now willing to participate in the European recognition of the integrity of the Danish monarchy, and especially in the new order of succession to the throne, already approved of by Russia. By the Treaty of London of May 8, 1852, it was agreed that, in view of the impending extinction of the male line of the Oldenburg dynasty, Prince Christian of Lyksborg, who had married Christian VIII's niece, Louisa of Hesse, should ascend the Danish throne on the death of Frederick VII, and that the succession should be vested in his heirs male. The Sleswick-Holstein pretender, the duke of Augustenburg, in consideration of the Danish government purchasing his Sleswick estates, had already solemnly engaged that neither he nor his family would ever undertake anything which might disturb the tranquillity or the succession of the Danish monarchy.

On the 2nd of October, 1855, was promulgated the new common constitution, which for two years had been the object of a fierce contention between the Conservatives and the Radicals. It led at once to foreign complications. Eleven separatist members of the new common Rigsraad protested at its very first session against the new constitution as subversive of the conventions of 1851 and 1852, on the following grounds. It had been drawn up by the Danish Rigsdag alone ; it unduly favoured the representation of the Danish population ; the duchies were consequently subordinated to Denmark. The Holstein Estates adopted and emphasised these complaints ; the Bund supported the duchies, and declared (Feb. 11, 1858) that it could not recognise the common

constitution of October 2, 1855, as binding upon Holstein and Lauenburg. On November 28 the Danish government partially gave way. The common constitution was repealed in respect to Holstein and Lauenburg, but was declared to be binding upon the rest of the monarchy. Nevertheless no understanding satisfactory to Denmark could be arrived at with Holstein; and meanwhile, in Germany, a strong movement for national unity began, which embraced the Sleswick-Holstein demands with enthusiasm. The Bund, encouraged by Austria and Prussia, supported the agitation despite the protests of the Danish government. In the Sleswick Estates also the majority was now violently anti-Danish, whilst a correspondingly bitter feeling against Germany arose in Denmark. The Danish premier (1857-1863) Carl Christian Hall, the talented founder and leader of the great middle-class National Liberal Party, misled by encouragement from England and France during an exchange of notes with the German powers, as well as by the warm sympathy of Charles XV of Sweden, and convinced, at last, of the impossibility of an agreement with the Holstein Estates as to the common organisation of the monarchy, issued, on March 30, 1863, a royal proclamation detaching Holstein, as far as possible, from the common monarchy. The duchy was to have her separate army and budget, whilst the legislative authority, in all common affairs, should be equally divided between the king and the Holstein Estates. Later in the year he went further still by proposing a common constitution for Denmark and Sleswick, based on a two-chamber system, which he succeeded in carrying through the Rigsdag, in the autumn of 1863. The Council of State confirmed it by forty votes to sixteen, on Nov. 13, 1863.

Two days later Frederick VII died; and Prince Christian of Lyksborg ascended the throne as Christian IX. The new common-constitution bill had not yet received the royal signature, and the new king hesitated to sanction it in the face of a protest from Prussia; but the insistence of Hall, supported as

it was by a strong popular agitation, induced him to submit ; and on November 18 the bill became law. The death of Frederick VII had materially weakened the position of Denmark. Nobody had questioned *his* right to the collective Danish monarchy, whereas Denmark's enemies now even attempted to evade the Treaty of London by which the rights of Christian IX were established. Moreover, despite his solemn covenant in 1852, the duke of Augustenburg now transferred his "rights" to his son Prince Frederick, who immediately caused himself to be proclaimed Frederick VIII, duke of Sleswick-Holstein ; the German Bund, which had never recognised the Treaty of London, sympathised with the pretender ; and Bismarck, who in the autumn of 1862 had become premier of Prussia, and desired a war with Denmark in order to strengthen the Prussian government in its dispute with the Chamber of Deputies, to demonstrate the superiority of the newly organised Prussian army, and to pave the way for Prussia's eventual occupation of the duchies, adopted an ambiguous attitude towards the Treaty of London, contending that its validity depended upon Denmark's observance of the "conventions of 1851-52." In December, Russia, Great Britain and France urged the Danish government to withdraw the November constitution. Hall resigned (Dec. 24) rather than comply ; and, while the succeeding Monrad ministry was endeavouring to find a mode of withdrawal both dignified and constitutional, Holstein was occupied by the troops of the Bund, and the pretender proclaimed himself duke.

Bismarck, thereupon, taking advantage of Austria's fear of the effect of the Holstein revolution on the lesser German states, induced the court of Vienna to join him in occupying Sleswick till the November constitution had been withdrawn and the conventions of 1851-2 enforced, at the same time provisionally recognising the Treaty of London and the integrity of the Danish monarchy. The project of the two great powers was thrown out by the Bund, but they persisted in

carrying it through, whilst Bismarck skilfully contrived that the Danish government should not have sufficient time legally to withdraw the November constitution. He had the less difficulty in accomplishing this as the European situation was now distinctly unfavourable to Denmark. Russia was under obligations to Prussia for her assistance during the late Polish insurrection; and Napoleon III, chagrined by England's rejection of his scheme for taking common action against Russia in the Polish affair by means of a European congress, refused, in his turn, the British plan of a joint intervention in favour of Denmark. Norway-Sweden, which, in 1853, had hovered on the verge of an offensive and defensive alliance with Denmark, was glad of the pretext of the November constitution to remain strictly neutral, so that Denmark lay at the mercy of the two great German powers.

A peremptory summons to the Danish government to withdraw the November constitution "within two days," a summons which the Danes could not be expected to obey, was the signal for the attack. On February 1, 1864, the combined Austrians and Prussians crossed the Eyder; and thus began the disastrous campaign which was interrupted by the armistice of May 9. Meanwhile, at the invitation of the British government, a congress of all the signatories of the Treaty of London, together with the representative of the Bund, had assembled in London, to terminate, if possible, the German-Danish quarrel. The conference lasted from April 20 to June 25, 1864, without any result. Denmark rejected the proposal of a purely personal union with the duchies; and neither party could agree as to the delimitation of Sleswick, the illusory hope of aid from Great Britain and Russia being the secret of the fatal obstinacy of the Danish government. Negotiation failing, war was resumed on June 26. The issue was a foregone conclusion. The island-fortress of Als was quickly lost; all Jutland was occupied; and the isolated Danish government was obliged to sue for peace, which was finally concluded at

Vienna (Oct. 30, 1864). All three duchies were irretrievably lost.

In the Peace of Prague, which terminated the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and led to the incorporation of the duchies with Prussia, Napoleon III procured the insertion of paragraph V, whereby the northern districts of Sleswick were to be reunited to Denmark when the majority of the population, by a free vote, should so desire it. The Danish Sleswickers, who wished for reunion with Denmark, placed great hopes upon this paragraph; but, when Prussia at last thought fit to negotiate with Denmark on the subject, she laid down conditions which the Danish government could not accept, especially as regarded the guarantees to be given for the free use of their language by the German-speaking subjects of the districts to be retroceded. Finally in 1878, by a separate agreement between Austria and Prussia, paragraph V was altogether rescinded.

The salient feature of Danish politics of late years has been the struggle between the two *Tings*, the *Folketing*, or Lower House, and the *Landsting* or Upper House of the Riksdag. This contest began in 1872, when a combination of all the Radical parties, known as "the United Left," passed a vote of want of confidence against the government and rejected the budget. Nevertheless the ministry, supported by the Landsting, refused to resign; and the crisis became acute when, in 1875, Jakob Brönum Estrup became prime minister. This courageous statesman, the son of the historian, Hector Estrup, was born at Sorö, April 16, 1825, and first entered parliament in 1864. In the following year he accepted the post of minister of the interior in the Friis cabinet, and in this capacity did more than any other Danish statesman to repair the havoc of the war by promoting railway construction and generally developing the national resources. Indeed from 1864 to 1869 he was indisputably the most popular minister of the day. Ill health compelled him to resign in 1869; but

on June 11, 1875, he returned to office and formed the administration which was to govern Denmark for the next eighteen years under exceptionally difficult, not to say dangerous circumstances. Perceiving that the coming struggle would be essentially a financial one, he retained the ministry of finance in his own hands; and, strong in the support of the king, the Landsting, and a considerable minority in the country itself, he devoted himself to the double task of establishing the political equality of the Landsting with the Folketing and strengthening the national armaments, so that, in the event of a war between the European great powers, Denmark might be in a position successfully to defend her neutrality.

The Left was willing to vote thirty millions of crowns for extraordinary military expenses, exclusive of the fortifications of Copenhagen, on condition that the amount should be covered by a property- and income-tax; and, as the elections of 1875 had given them a majority of three-fourths in the popular chamber, they spoke with no uncertain voice. But the Upper House steadily supported Estrup, who was disinclined to accept any such compromise. As an agreement between the two houses on the budget proved impossible, a provisional financial decree was issued on April 12, 1877, which the Left stigmatised as a breach of the constitution. On November 8 an agreement was arrived at between the Rigsdag and the government as to the budget for the current financial year; and the difficulties of the ministry were somewhat relieved by a split in the Radical party, still further accentuated by the elections of 1879, which enabled Estrup to carry through the army and navy defence bill and the new military penal code by leaning alternately upon one or the other of the divided Radical groups.

After the elections of 1881, which brought about the re-amalgamation of the various Radical sections, the Opposition presented a united front to the government, so that, from 1882 onwards, legislation was almost at a standstill. The elections

of 1884 showed clearly that the nation also was now on the side of the Radicals, eighty-three out of the 102 members of the Folketing belonging to the Opposition. Even the capital, which had hitherto been solidly Conservative, elected social democrats and Radicals in four out of its nine electoral districts. Still Estrup remained at his post. He had underestimated the force of public opinion, but he was conscientiously convinced that a Conservative ministry was necessary for Denmark at this crisis. When therefore the Rigsdag rejected the budget, he advised the king to issue another provisional financial decree. Henceforth, so long as the Folketing refused to vote supplies, the ministry regularly adopted these makeshifts ; and, despite the loud protests of the Lower House, the war minister, Bahnsen, completed the fortifications of Copenhagen with the money so obtained. In 1886 the Left, having no constitutional means of dismissing the Estrup ministry, resorted for the first time to negotiation ; but it was not till April 1, 1894, that the majority of the Folketing could arrive at an agreement with the government and the Landsting as to a budget which should be retrospective and sanction the employment of the funds so irregularly obtained for military expenditure. The whole question of the provisional financial decrees was ultimately regularised by a special resolution of the Rigsdag ; and the retirement of the Estrup ministry in August, 1894, was the immediate result of the compromise.

In spite of the composition of 1894, the animosity between Folketing and Landsting continues to characterise Danish politics, and the situation has been complicated by the division of both Right and Left into widely divergent groups. The elections of 1895 resulted in an undeniable victory of the extreme Radicals ; and the budget for 1895-6 was passed only at the last moment by a compromise between the two parties. The session of 1896-97 was remarkable for a *rapprochement* between the ministry and the "Left Reform Party," caused by the secession of the "Young Right," which led to an unprecedented event

in Danish politics—the voting of the budget by the Radical Folketing and its rejection by the Conservative Landsting in May, 1897; whereupon the ministry resigned in favour of the moderate Conservative Hörring cabinet, which induced the Upper House to pass the budget. The elections of 1898 were a fresh defeat for the Conservatives, and in the autumn session of the same year, the Folketing, by a crushing majority of 85 to 12, rejected the military budget as unnecessary in the existing state of foreign politics. The ministry was saved by a mere accident—the expulsion of Danish agitators from North Sleswick by the German government, which evoked a passion of patriotic protest throughout Denmark and united all parties. There was even a demonstration in the capital in front of the German Embassy; and the war minister declared in the Folketing, during the debate on the military budget (Jan. 1899), that the armaments of Denmark were so far advanced that any great power must think twice before venturing to attack her. The chief event of the year 1899 was the great strike of 40,000 artisans, which cost Denmark fifty million crowns, and brought about a reconstruction of the cabinet in order that the popular director of the new Danish Fire Insurance Company, Herr Bramsen, generally recognised as a specialist in industrial matters, should arbitrate, on the part of the government, as minister of the interior. He succeeded (Sept. 2-4) in bringing about an understanding between workmen and employers. The year 1900 was also remarkable for the further disintegration of the Conservative party still in office (the Sehested cabinet superseded the Hörring cabinet on April 27), and the almost total paralysis of parliament caused by the interminable debates on the question of taxation reform. Of sixty-nine bills laid before the Rigsdag from October, 1900, to the end of January, 1901, only one was passed.

CHAPTER XVII.

SWEDEN AND NORWAY SINCE 1814.

CHARLES XIII died on February 5, 1818, and was succeeded by Bernadotte under the title of Charles XIV John. The new king devoted himself to the promotion of the material development of the country; the Göta canal absorbing the greater portion of the twenty-four million dalers voted for the purpose. The external debt of Sweden was gradually extinguished, the internal debt considerably reduced, and the budget showed an average annual surplus of 700,000 dalers. With returning prosperity the necessity for political reform became urgent in Sweden. The antiquated Riksdag, where the privileged Estates predominated, while the cultivated middle class was practically unrepresented, had become an insuperable obstacle to all free development; but, although the Riksdag of 1840 itself raised the question, the king and the aristocracy refused to entertain it. Yet the reign of Charles XIV was on the whole most beneficial to Sweden; and, if there was much just cause for complaint, his great services to his adopted country were generally acknowledged and appreciated. Abroad he maintained a policy of peace based mainly on a good understanding with Russia.

Oscar I (1844-59), born at Paris in 1799, had been carefully educated, as became the heir to the Swedish throne. As crown-prince he had disapproved of many of his father's reactionary measures, and stood aloof from politics. Shortly

after his accession (March 4, 1844) he laid several projects of reform before the Riksdag; but the Estates would do little more than abolish the obsolete marriage and inheritance laws and a few commercial monopolies. As the financial situation necessitated a large increase of taxation, there was much popular discontent, which culminated in riots in the streets of Stockholm (March, 1848). Yet, when fresh proposals for parliamentary reform were laid before the Riksdag in 1849, they were again rejected by three out of the four Estates. As regards foreign politics, Oscar I was strongly anti-German. On the outbreak of the Dano-Prussian War of 1848-9, Sweden, as we have seen, sympathised warmly with Denmark; hundreds of Swedish volunteers hastened to Sleswick-Holstein; and the Riksdag voted two million dalers for additional armaments. It was Sweden, too, that mediated the truce of Malmö (Aug. 26, 1848), which helped Denmark out of her difficulties. During the Crimean War Sweden remained neutral, although public opinion was decidedly anti-Russian, and sundry politicians regarded the conjuncture as favourable for regaining Finland.

Oscar I died on July 8, 1859, and was succeeded by his son Charles XV, who had, since 1857, acted as regent during his father's illness. A highly educated and accomplished monarch, with lofty ideals and charming manners, he speedily endeared himself to his people, and succeeded, with the invaluable aid of the minister of justice, Baron Louis Gerhard de Geer, in at last accomplishing the much-needed reform of the constitution. The way had been prepared in 1860 by a sweeping measure of municipal reform; and in January, 1863, the government brought in a reform bill, by the terms of which the Riksdag was henceforth to consist of two chambers, the Upper House being a sort of aristocratic Senate, while the members of the Lower House were to be elected triennially by popular suffrage. The new constitution was accepted by all four Estates in 1865, and promulgated on January 22, 1866. On September 1, 1866, the first elections under the new system

were held; and on January 19, 1867, the new Riksdag met for the first time. With this one great reform Charles XV had to be content; in all other directions he was hampered more or less by his own creation. The Riksdag refused to sanction his favourite project of a reform of the Swedish army on the Prussian model, for which he laboured all his life, partly from motives of economy, partly from an apprehension of the king's martial tendencies.

In 1864 Charles XV had endeavoured to form an anti-Prussian league with Denmark; and after the defeat of Denmark he projected a Scandinavian union, in order, with the assistance of France, to oppose Prussian predominance in the north—a policy which naturally collapsed with the overthrow of the French empire in 1870. He died on September 18, 1872, and was succeeded by his brother, the duke of Gothland, who reigned as Oscar II. The new king was as intent as his predecessor upon army reform. But the agrarian party now dominating the Riksdag (whose rage for economy went the length of cutting down the civil list and refusing to vote money for the coronation, so that the king had to be crowned at his own expense) was in no mood to meet Oscar II's wishes. For the first fifteen years of the new reign, therefore, the armament question agitated the Riksdag and the nation. Money was voted indeed for the reorganisation of the navy (an object especially dear to a sailor king) and the amelioration of the artillery in 1875; but ministry after ministry failed to carry through the whole government programme in the face of the determined opposition of parliament till 1885, and even then serious concessions had to be made to the agrarians. The new law, which came into force on Jan. 1, 1887, established universal conscription in Sweden for the first time. In 1888 the agrarians succeeded in imposing protective duties on corn and other goods; and in 1892 the threatening attitude of Norway induced the Boström ministry to introduce a new bill for the further strengthening of the Swedish army. In 1894

the number of the members of the Upper Chamber was increased to 150, and that of the Lower Chamber to 250; and the further extension of the somewhat exclusive electorate was also considered, although neither the government nor the Riksdag was prepared to adopt universal suffrage.

But it was the Norwegian question which now overshadowed all others. Ever since the Union of 1815, Norway had persistently endeavoured to obtain absolute political equality with Sweden, even at the risk of a rupture. Now any slackening of the Union meant the weakening of the royal authority, the chief prop of the Union, which being vested in a semi-foreign dynasty imposed upon Norway by force, could not be very popular there. Moreover the Act of Union itself was, in some points, so ambiguously worded, that both parties, with a little ingenuity, could interpret it their own way. The first anti-monarchical step was taken in 1821, when the Storthing abolished the Norwegian nobility, despite the protest of the king, but for whose energetic intervention it would also have repudiated the payment of Norway's covenanted share of the old Danish national debt. Under Oscar I, who conceded to Norway a national flag and coat-of-arms and founded the Norwegian Order of St Olof, there was little friction between the crown and the Norwegians; but the first Storthing of Charles XV abolished the office of viceroy, which from 1814 to 1827 had been held exclusively by Swedes, on the ground that it was an anomalous dignity, to the great indignation of the Swedes, who regarded the proceeding as a high-handed breach of the Union. Indeed an actual conflict between the two countries was avoided only by the king's refusal to confirm the decree of the Storthing. A counter-proposal from the Swedish Riksdag for a revision of the Union was disregarded by the Storthing till 1865, when the whole question was submitted to the consideration of a joint revision-committee, whose recommendations were however ultimately rejected by the Storthing in 1870.

After the accession of Oscar II (Sept. 18, 1872), the attitude of the Norwegian parliament became more conciliatory. It even voted the expenses of the coronation at Throndhjem (July 18, 1873), in return for which act of liberality the king consented to the abolition of the viceroyalty. The Storthing also agreed to a *Zollverein* with Sweden in 1874, and acceded to the Scandinavian currency convention in 1875, and to the Scandinavian bill of exchange convention in 1880. But since 1880, when the Norwegian Radicals came into power, the conflict between the two states has been incessant. The first dispute turned upon the so-called "Staatsraadssag." So early as 1871 the Storthing had demanded that the extra-parliamentary Staatsraader, or members of the Council of State—in other words, the Norwegian ministry—should have access to parliament and participate in its debates, a demand which Oscar I rejected as contrary to the Act of Union. The matter was again brought forward in 1877, but Oscar II also interposed his veto. The struggle was soon complicated by the intrusion of fresh points of difference, notably the question of the "pure" Norwegian flag, i.e. the Norwegian flag minus the symbol of the Union.

On May 17, 1880, the Storthing for the third time passed its resolution concerning the "Staatsraadssag," the Radicals maintaining that, according to the letter of the constitution, the king could no longer interpose his suspensive veto, and consequently the resolution had become law; whilst the Right and the government insisted that, this being an alteration of the constitution itself, the royal veto was absolute. Accordingly the king was advised to withhold his sanction to the bill; whereupon the Radical leader, Johan Sverdrup, retaliated by declaring that his resolution on the "Staatsraadssag" had become an inviolable statute, since the Storthing had thrice passed it by the statutory majority required in such cases. The government refused, however, to promulgate the so-called statute; and the result was an extraordinary popular agitation

in Norway, and a violent rupture between the constantly increasing anti-Swedish Radical party, which depended principally on the peasants, and the Conservatives, who were friendly to the government and strongest in the towns. Moreover the armament question about this time added fresh fuel to the flames. Universal conscription had been adopted in 1876; but, when the government subsequently introduced a measure for reorganising the army, it met with the most determined opposition from the Radical party.

In 1880 the Conservative leader, Frederick Stang, who for the last thirty-five years had acted as a mediator between the irreconcilables of both parties, and greatly contributed to the material welfare of the country, resigned in favour of his colleague, Christian August Selmer, on whom now devolved the unenviable task of fighting an almost unanimous and violently mutinous Storthing in the name of the government. On dismissing the Storthing, in June 1882, the king informed the house that the highest legal authorities had confirmed him in his opinion of the correctness of his attitude in the Staatsraad question; and he concluded by urging every true patriot to support him in his efforts to maintain the law. Such an appeal was useless at a time when the country was agitated from end to end; and the elections held the same year resulted in a further triumph for the Radicals, who now held no fewer than 82 of the 114 seats in the Storthing. They immediately proceeded to exercise their power by impeaching the ministry (April, 1880) for having advised the king to interpose his veto in the Staatsraad affair; and after a nine months' session the *Rigsret*, or highest political tribunal, where a Radical majority were now sitting as judges in their own cause, declared that Selmer and most of his colleagues had forfeited their offices. The king, on the other hand, acting by the advice of the most eminent jurists of both countries, declared that the judgment of the *Rigsret* was contrary to the letter of the constitution as well as an infringement of his

prerogative, while, to save his dignity, he privately requested the Norwegian ministers to send in their resignations, which he immediately accepted. He then made two further attempts to rule the country with the aid of the Conservatives, but was obliged at last (June 23, 1883) to send for the leader of the Radical majority, Johan Sverdrup, at the same time giving way on the Staatsraad question.

Under the Sverdrup administration (1884-1889) there was a lull in Norwegian politics. The king, prudently yielding to the unmistakeable will of the nation, gave his sanction to most of the bills so long in suspense; and great hopes were entertained by the progressive party of Sverdrup who, by his energy, courage, and eloquence, had succeeded after a struggle of nearly thirty years in forming the first "Left-Cabinet" in Norway. But the responsibilities of office at last opened the eyes of the liberal leader to the danger of dissolving the Union by pressing the radical demands too far; his views gradually assumed a more conservative tinge; and after the split of the Radical party in 1887, on the Church organisation question, into "the national Left" and "the pure Left," Sverdrup was even glad to accept assistance from his old adversaries of the Right, which, under the able leadership of Emil Stang, the son of Frederick Stang, had again become a power in the State. At the general election of 1888 the Right secured fifty-one seats, while of the sixty-three members of the Left only twenty-six supported Sverdrup. He resigned office on July 12, 1889, in favour of Stang, who, with the assistance of the moderate Left, succeeded in passing most of his predecessor's measures. He refused, however, to commit himself to universal suffrage, as being a hazardous experiment with a one-chamber system.

Unfortunately Norway's inveterate distrust of Sweden, a distrust natural enough, perhaps, in the smaller and weaker of two confederated states, but none the less unjustifiable and unprofitable, continued to assert itself on the slightest pretext, with the inevitable result of provoking reprisals from Sweden.

There is something to be said, no doubt, for the contention of Norway that her relatively enormous trading fleet (which is much larger than that of Sweden) entitles her to a separate consular service; but this in itself apparently reasonable claim was only the prelude to a further demand for a separate foreign office. Sweden obviously could not allow Norway to negotiate independently with foreign powers at the risk of imperilling the political existence of the dual state. To deny the possibility of such a contingency is deliberately to shut one's eyes to plain facts. The treasonable coquetting with Russia of ultra-Radicals like Björnson and Ullman, who have gone so far as actually to propose the virtual cession of two ice-free ports to that power, is eloquent of Norway's suicidal tendencies. With Russia at her very door, an independent Norway would be far more dangerous to Sweden than an independent Ireland would ever be to Great Britain. Nor can it be fairly said that Sweden has not endeavoured to meet half-way the views of her sister state as regards foreign representation. Thus, on the opening of the Storthing in February, 1891, King Oscar, in his speech from the throne, announced that a project would be laid before the parliaments of both countries, providing that all important foreign or other common affairs should be discussed in each of the respective Councils of State in the presence, *mutatis mutandis*, of three of the ministers from the other country. The Radicals, not content with this, moved that Norway should have the absolute control of her relations with foreign powers. Stang, on refusing to accept a motion which was tantamount to the break-up of the Union, was defeated by four votes; and on March 5, 1891, a second Radical Ministry was formed under Johannes Steen, the leader of "the pure Left."

The conflict with the unionist party was now resumed with ever-increasing violence; and, at the general election of 1891, when the Left returned sixty-five members against forty-nine of the Right, an independent foreign office and an independent consular service were the chief items of the Radical programme.

When the new Storthing was opened in February, 1892, the aspect of affairs was so threatening that a civil war between the two countries appeared inevitable ; and Swedish statesmen and the Swedish press openly proclaimed the necessity of drawing the sword. The intervention of the king prevented matters from proceeding to extremities ; and, after the Radical cabinet had been dismissed in 1893, and a Conservative administration had vainly attempted to govern in 1894, Oscar II fell back upon a coalition ministry, which was formed in 1895 under Professor Hagerup. Simultaneously a Union committee, consisting of statesmen of both countries, was formed to settle the differences between them ; but the uncompromising attitude of the Norwegian delegates rendered anything like an agreement impossible ; and on January 29, 1898, the Committee was dissolved. By this time the two countries again appeared to be rushing towards civil war. The resolutions of the Storthing in the session of 1896–1897 had been distinctly anti-Swedish. On the king refusing to sanction the bill for the introduction of "a pure Norwegian flag," the Storthing refused to increase the appanages of the king and the crown-prince, voted a very paltry contribution to the Stockholm Jubilee Exhibition by a majority of ten votes only (July 6, 1896), and, a few weeks later, even attempted to make an anti-dynastic demonstration out of the Nansen festivities. Naturally all domestic legislation suffered in consequence of political disputes, while the debates on the military budget were of sinister augury for the future, the Storthing doubling the amount demanded by the government for military purposes, with the obvious intention of controlling its distribution.

The general election in the autumn of 1897 still further strengthened the Radicals, who now possessed the statutory majority of two-thirds indispensable for introducing constitutional reforms. On February 17, 1898, Hagerup's Conservative ministry was superseded by an ultra-Radical cabinet under Johannes Steen ; while the professional agitator and republican,

Viggo Ullmann, was elected president of the Storthing. On April 21 a bill introducing universal suffrage, which doubled the electorate, was passed; and on May 3 a direct attack was made upon the Union by a motion, subsequently postponed, which provided for the separate representation of Norway in all negotiations with foreign powers. In the middle of May, moreover, 16,000,000 crowns were voted for the construction of war-ships and the building of fortresses, a measure which was regarded in Sweden as a direct menace. In the autumn session the extreme Left reintroduced the irritating question of "the pure Norwegian flag"; and virulent attacks were made upon the Swedish government for its perfectly legitimate declaration that the consular and diplomatic unity of both countries must be regarded as a condition precedent to any reform of the Act of Union. The indignation caused in Sweden by the adoption of the new flag law of the Storthing in November, 1898, was exacerbated when King Oscar, while withholding his sanction to the measure, permitted its official publication, justifying his action by an appeal to par. 79 of the Norwegian constitution. Public opinion and the national press in Sweden energetically demanded that the Swedish minister of foreign affairs, Count Douglass, should refuse to notify the unconstitutional decree of the Storthing to the powers, thus branding "the pure Norwegian flag" as an illusory emblem without any political significance. Indeed the agitation nearly led to a cabinet crisis in Sweden.

On January 23, 1899, King Oscar, whose long failing health broke down utterly beneath the strain of the unional conflict, entrusted the regency of the realm to the crown-prince Gustavus, a notoriously uncompromising opponent of the Norwegian claims. The first official act of the prince-regent was to reject the demand of the Storthing that Norway should be represented separately at the Hague convention. This rebuff naturally intensified the long-existing aversion of

the Norwegians to the prince, and was the occasion of disgraceful hostile demonstrations against him during his residence at Christiania in March. Immediately after his return to the Swedish capital, where he was received with an ovation, the rumour spread that the Norwegian government was secretly arming against Sweden, and that the new projected loan of fifty million crowns, sanctioned on March 12, ostensibly for railways, was really for military purposes. The alacrity, moreover, with which the Storthing unanimously voted (May 25) the military budget of 11,500,000 crowns, increased these suspicions, which naturally were not allayed by the violent anti-unional and anti-dynastic speeches of Ullmann and Blehr (a member of the ministry) on the occasion of the national festival of May 17. Fortunately, on May 11, King Oscar again resumed his authority, and the influence of the great peacemaker was quickly felt. At the session of the Swedish-Norwegian Councils of State of October 11, 1899, at which the crown-prince was also present, Oscar II, while expressing his deep regret at the disturbing effect of the Storthing's flag-resolution, declared that the statute of June 20, 1844, which had added the unional symbol to the Norwegian commercial flag, should cease and determine on December 15, 1899, and that the change should be duly notified to the foreign powers. Moreover this concession was emphasised by the simultaneous retirement of the Swedish minister of foreign affairs, Count Douglass, the most steady opponent of the Norwegian claim throughout. A separate consular service for Norway has since (1903) been conceded.

Apart from the conflict with Norway, the history of Sweden since 1894 is relatively unimportant, and can be summarised in a few words. Her domestic policy turns principally on tariffs and commercial questions, warmly debated between the agrarian protectionists and the free-traders. The agrarians, in their own interests, support the unional policy of the government, and steadily vote the ever-increasing military-

budgets in view of contingent troubles with the sister state. The strong Conservative element in the Riksdag, moreover, has led it to regard with disfavour every liberal project of constitutional and electoral reform, so that, practically, the Swedish Radicals have had little opportunity of making themselves heard. Something like a sensation was caused by the election to the Riksdag of the first socialist deputy, Branting, in 1896; and general indignation was caused in January, 1899, when it became known that the king and the prime minister Boström had favourably received the bearers of a monster Radical petition, with 363,638 signatures, in favour of the introduction of universal suffrage. Both houses of the Riksdag, on the first day of the session of 1899 (Jan. 18), marked their displeasure of this step by enthusiastically applauding the denunciations of their respective presidents against the Radical agitators who, they urged, would lend a helping hand to the Norwegian rebels by overthrowing the Swedish constitution.

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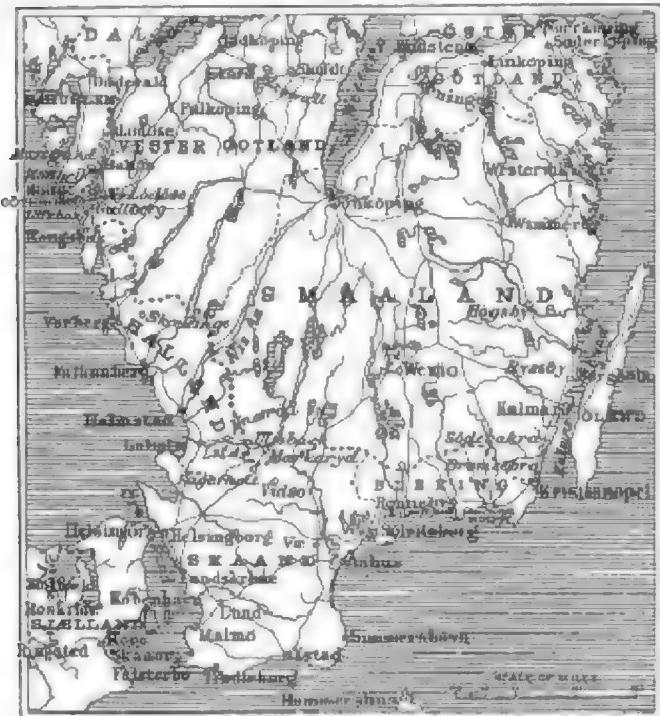
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To illustrate the land-wars between Sweden and Denmark.



Explanations :

Aa and *Ee* = river.

Cos = county.

Ny = new..

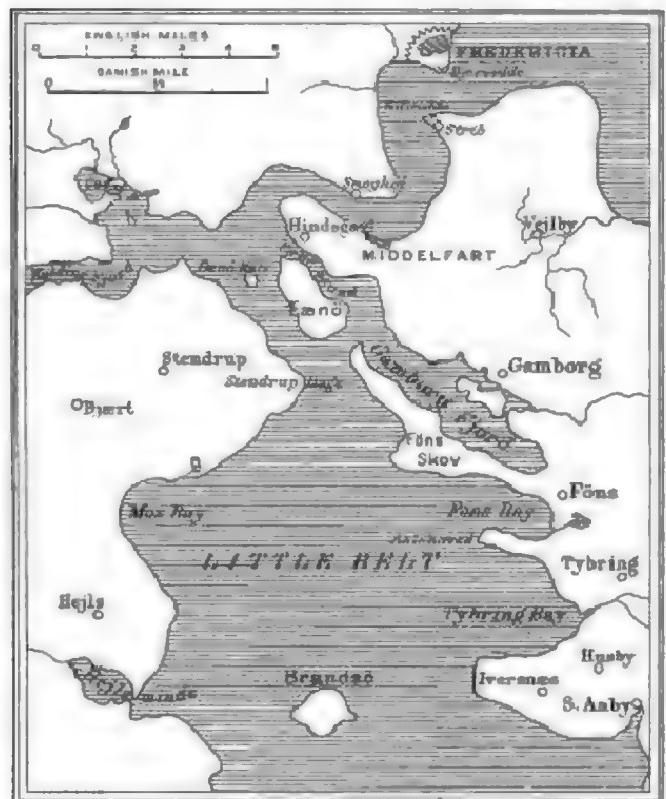
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To illustrate CHARLES X.'s passage of the
Little Belt.



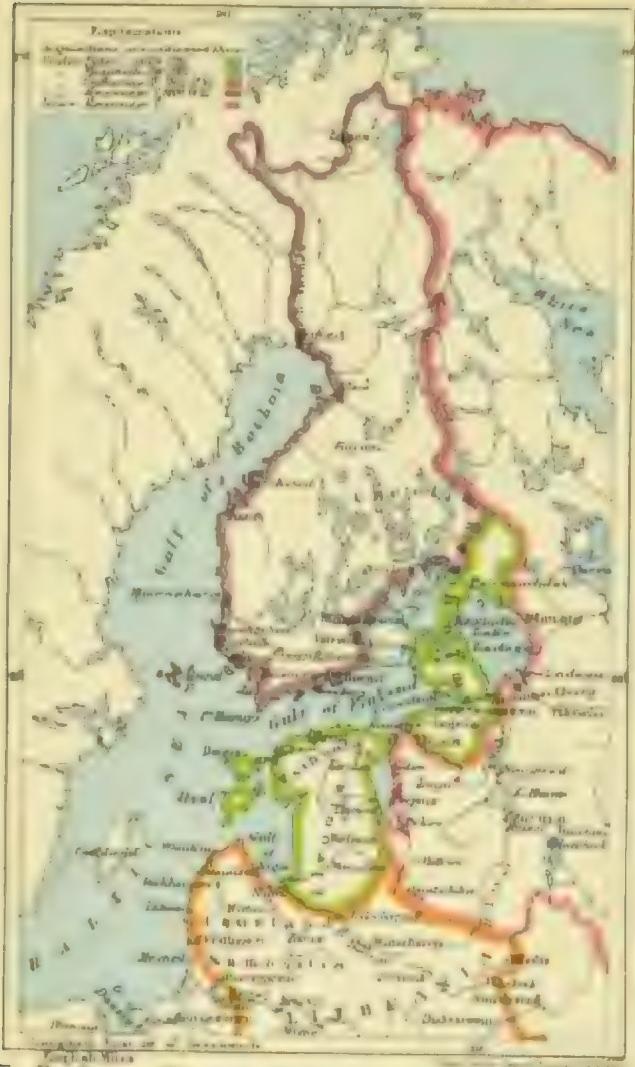
Explanations :

Høj = hill. *Skov* = wood. *Hoved* = head.
Ø = island. *Odal* = point.

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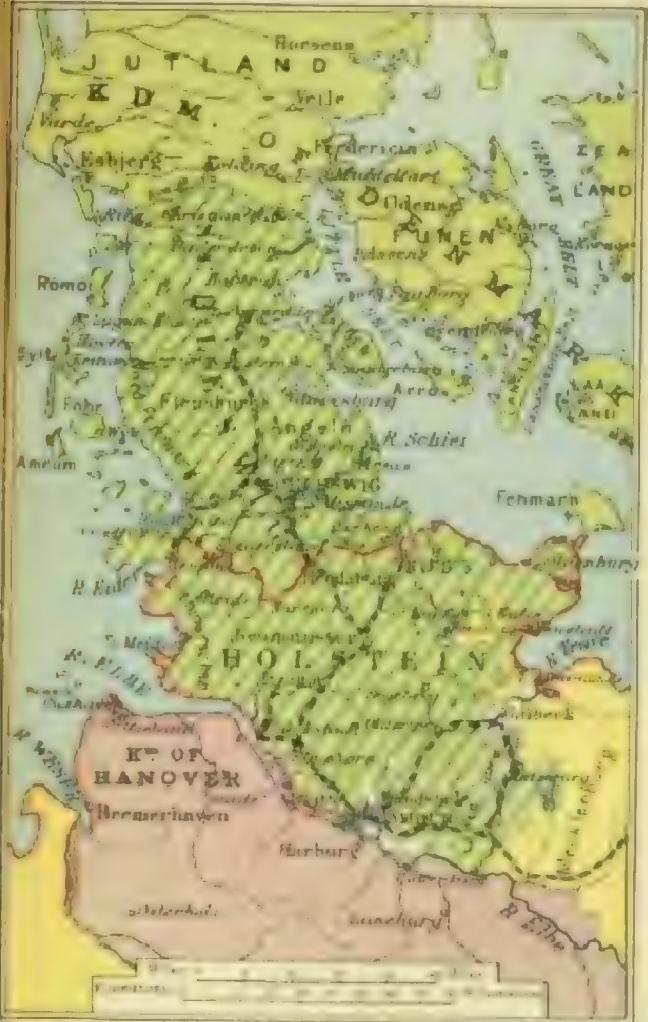
THE ADVANCE OF RUSSIA
TOWARDS THE NORTH WEST.



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THE DUCHIES OF SCHLESWIG, HOLSTEIN, AND LAUTENBURG.



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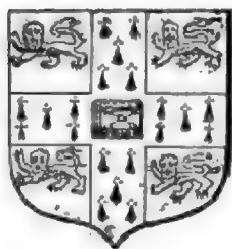
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